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A Study Of Competencies Perceived To Be Important By Professionals In Entry-level Positions Within College Student Affairs

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A STUDY OF COMPETENCIES PERCEIVED TO BE IMPORTANT BY PROFESSIONALS IN ENTRY-LEVEL POSITIONS WITHIN COLLEGE STUDENT AFFAIRS

by

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ABSTRACT

The researcher utilized the 2007 American College Personnel Association (ACPA) Steering Committee on Professional Competencies report, *Professional Competencies*, to determine the importance of a set of competencies for work in entry-level student affairs positions. The researcher also studied whether there were any differences in importance of these competencies based on functional area (e.g., residence life/housing, student activities) and institutional type (i.e., four-year public and four-year private). Via an online questionnaire, the researcher sent the list of competencies to a sample of 970 members of ACPA who were self-selected as entry-level members and received 224 usable responses.

Of the 75 individual competency items studied, 66 were found to be, minimally, "important" for entry-level positions overall, thus reinforcing the fact that entry-level practitioners need a wide array of competencies to perform the responsibilities within their positions. Competencies related to advising and helping others, including students and colleagues, were rated the highest, while those related to the legal foundations of the field were rated the lowest, yet still at least "somewhat important."

Several significant differences were found between groups within the studied demographic variables and the degree of importance of the competencies. Specifically, there were very few significant differences in the degree of importance of competencies based on respondent institutional type. Compared to other demographic items, functional area by far indicated the most significant differences between groups.

To Mom, Dad, and Jenny

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACPA	American College Personnel Association
ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
BEI	Behavioral Event Interview
CAS	Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education
COSPA	Council of Student Personnel Associations
CSAO	Chief Student Affairs Officer
IRB	Institutional Review Board
NASPA	National Association of Student Personnel Administrators
SSAO	Senior Student Affairs Officer
SCPC	Steering Committee on Professional Competencies
TFPPP	Task Force on Professional Preparation and Practice
THE	Tomorrow's Higher Education

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

General Background of Study

Student affairs professionals "come from a variety of educational backgrounds and experiences, yet they share a common goal in attempting to improve the educational experience of the college student" (Wade, 1993, p. 9). Staff members in all levels of management play a crucial role in student development. They have the ability to influence the success or failure not only of the functional area (e.g., residence life/housing, student activities, or admissions/enrollment management) in which they work, but also of an institution's student affairs division. As such, they need the skills, knowledge, and attitudes to be effective in their positions (Komives & Woodard, 1996). That being said, current "literature reveals no consensus about core competencies for student affairs practitioners" (Pope & Reynolds, 1997, p. 268). This notion is echoed by, among others, the American College Personnel Association (ACPA) Task Force on Certification (2006), referring to competencies for the field as a whole; Randall and Globetti (1992), referring to competencies for upper-level administrators; and Herdlein (2004) and Kuk, Cobb, and Forrest (2007), both referring to competencies for entry-level professionals.

In an effort to begin to address this lack of an agreed-upon set of competencies, ACPA, one of the two preeminent professional associations for student affairs administrators, commissioned a task force in 2004 to address professional certification. Work on this task force eventually led to the creation of a steering committee comprised of student affairs professionals representing a variety of positions (including all

management levels, graduate preparation program faculty members, and doctoral students), functional areas, and expertise on the topic. This steering committee created a report, *Professional Competencies*, which was intended to serve as the foundation for professional development in the field (Steering Committee on Professional Competencies [SCPC], 2007). The competencies presented in the report were representative of general work within the field, with no attention given to potential differences related to institutional type, functional area, or management level (i.e., entry-, mid-, or upper-level). This report is significant for several reasons: (a) It was released and endorsed by a professional association, as opposed to being published by one or more individual practitioners or researchers; (b) at the time of this study, it was one of the most current and comprehensive publications to address competencies for student affairs; and (c) several of the committee members who participated in the creation of the document and/or whose work was utilized to create the competency list are considered experts as it relates to the topic of competencies in student affairs.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study was to determine (a) the degree to which the competencies listed in the 2007 ACPA SCPC report were important for work in entry-level student affairs positions, according to entry-level practitioners; (b) the difference, if any, in the degree to which the competencies were important for work in entry-level positions, according to entry-level practitioners who worked in different functional areas of the field; and (c) the difference, if any, in the degree to which the competencies were

important for work in entry-level positions, according to entry-level practitioners who worked in different institutional types.

Definitions

Competency: An "*underlying characteristic* of an individual that is *causally related* to *criterion-referenced effective and/or superior performance* in a job or situation" (Spencer & Spencer, 1993, p. 9). In Spencer and Spencer's definition, a competency includes knowledge, motives, self-concept, skills, and traits.

Knowledge: The "information a person has in specific content areas" (Spencer & Spencer, p. 10).

Motives: The "things a person consistently thinks about or wants that cause action" (Spencer & Spencer, p. 9).

Self-concept: A person's "attitudes, values, or self-image" (Spencer & Spencer, p. 10).

Skill: A person's "ability to perform a certain physical or mental task" (Spencer & Spencer, p. 11).

Traits: A person's "physical characteristics and consistent responses to situations or information" (Spencer & Spencer, p. 10).

Competency model: An "organizing framework that lists the competencies required for effective performance in a specific job, job family (i.e., group of related jobs), organization, function, . . . process" (Marrelli, Tondora, & Hoge, 2005, p. 537), or occupation/profession.

Upper-level: Includes positions for practitioners who serve as, or directly report to, the "administrative head of the institution-level student affairs unit on a campus"

(Winston, Creamer, & Miller, 2001, p. xi). The most senior position at an institution may also be known as the Senior Student Affairs Officer (SSAO) or Chief Student Affairs Officer (CSAO).

Mid-level: Includes positions for practitioners who report directly to the SSAO, or to the person who reports directly to the SSAO (Fey, 1991), typically oversees one or more functional areas within student affairs, and supervises one or more professional staff members (Kane, 1982).

Entry-level: Includes positions for practitioners who have less than five years of full-time experience in student affairs and that do not include supervision of other professional staff (Fey, 1991).

Student affairs graduate preparation program: In this study, a program that has the intent to prepare, via a master's degree, students for work in the field of student affairs in higher education.

Statement of the Problem

Rationale for the Study

Organizations, educational or otherwise, cannot function without people. Within the last 70 years of the study of organizations, a new paradigm involving the human aspect of organizations has arisen (Owens & Valesky, 2007). As opposed to the focus on the bureaucratic nature of organizations, this paradigm focuses on "building human capital: that organizations become more effective as the people in them grow and develop personally and professionally" (Owens & Valesky, p. 160). Those who believe in the importance of human capital feel that an organization's most valuable asset is people

(i.e., employees), and their skills and knowledge. As a result, the organization should "invest in the development of . . . [its] human capital" (Rainey, 2003, p. 221).

In a similar view, Bolman and Deal's (2008) human resources frame looks past the structural elements of an organization and focuses on the people—their "skills, attitudes, energy, and commitment" (p. 121)—who comprise the organization. Proponents of the human resources point of view believe that these factors are important in any field that has a "human side." Bolman and Deal would add that organizations exist to serve human needs. This philosophy mirrors that of student affairs in higher education.

With this change in the way organizations are viewed has come an increased emphasis on human resources functions, including the employee selection process, professional development, and other functions that affect retention and persistence (e.g., reward systems and motivation). This emphasis affirms the need for the creation and utilization of *effective* human resources processes, and in particular, that of selection. Effective selection ensures "that the right people are in the right places at the right times" (Stewart & Brown, 2009, p. 200).

An organization's desire to find the "right" person, the one who possesses, among other things, the specific competencies that complement job responsibilities, exists partly as a means of retaining that person in a position. This in turn not only saves time and money (e.g., in on-the-job training or a search to fill a vacated position), but also increases individual—and as a result organizational—effectiveness. In an ideal world, then, each position would be filled based on a process that would determine which candidate has, among other things, the desired competencies for that specific position. This is also known as finding "fit."

Although there is no definitive definition of the term *fit* as it relates to human resources within organizations (Adkins, Russell, & Werbel, 1994), it can be understood on the most basic level as the compatibility between a person (i.e., candidate or employee) and an organizational characteristic (e.g., job tasks or culture). While there are different types of fit (e.g., person-job, person-group, person-organization, or person-vocation), the one most applicable to this study is person-job fit, which includes the "match between employees knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) and job demands" (Kristof-Brown, 2000, p. 643).

Person-job fit is important for both the person and the organization. In a meta-analysis that investigated the relationship between person-job fit and various outcomes, Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, and Johnson (2005) found a strong correlation between person-job fit and increased job satisfaction and organizational commitment, along with decreased intent to quit. While fit was found to have only a moderate relationship with overall job performance, "if a person does not have the requisite abilities to meet situational demands, overall and task performance are likely to suffer" (Kristof-Brown et al., p. 288), further emphasizing the importance of finding the right person for a position. Competencies, while only one part of finding overall fit, are nonetheless one significant piece of the fit puzzle.

Student affairs practitioners and researchers have clearly supported the importance of finding fit between a person and a position, office or department, and institution (Hamrick & Hemphill, 2009; Harned & Murphy, 1998; Magolda & Carnaghi, 2004; Renn & Hodges, 2007), as finding the person who has the appropriate student affairs "background and abilities to perform the job and also that fits into the environment

is crucial to the success of any organization" (Carpenter, 2001, p. 219). As such, student affairs professionals have shown an interest in finding fit by studying and/or providing experience-based opinions regarding such things as personality type, leadership style, and competencies. While much of the literature focuses on student affairs workers as a whole, many have added specificity by concentrating on functional area, institutional type (e.g., public or private, two- or four-year), and/or management level. This study concentrated on competencies needed for entry-level student affairs in higher education positions.

What Are Competencies?

The concepts of *competence* and *competencies* within human resources have existed since at least the late 1960s (Draganidis & Mentzas, 2006; Liu, Ruan, & Xu, 2005). In the United States (US), the topic began to dominate the human resources literature in the 1990s (Le Deist & Winterton, 2005). Since then, competency-based human resources applications have become prevalent in the US (Le Deist & Winterton).

Since the beginning of competency interest in the realm of work functioning, there have been countless definitions, encompassing a variety of human qualities, proposed by researchers, educators, professionals, and laypeople alike. In general, however, competencies may include the knowledge, skills, abilities, characteristics, traits, motives, attitudes, and/or values that are needed to function successfully in a position (Boyatzis, 1982; Mirabile, 1997; Parry, 1996; Spencer & Spencer, 1993).

When competencies are identified for organizations or occupations/professions, they are typically grouped into a *competency model*, "an organizing framework that lists the competencies required for effective performance in a specific job, job family (i.e.,

group of related jobs), organization, function, or process" (Marrelli et al., 2005, p. 537). Models may include a number of competencies, often grouped into clusters or categories of related competencies (e.g., Advising and Helping or Ethics, as grouped in *Professional Competencies*). The methods by which competency models are developed are as numerous as the definition of *competency*.

How Are Competencies Determined?

The competencies seen as important or essential for effective work in a certain position or even occupation may be determined through one or more of a number of different processes. There is a variety of ways by which organizations or occupations can create and organize their competency models (Lucia & Lepsinger, 1999; Rodriguez, Patel, Bright, Gregory, & Gowing, 2002; Rothwell & Lindholm, 1999). While numerous methods or processes exist, "the final outcome of them all is essentially the same: identification of . . . [competencies] required to successfully perform a given role" (Lucia & Lepsinger, p. 18), so that the competencies that distinguish between average and successful performers can be determined and organized according to the needs of the organization.

Why Study Competencies?

In addition to helping people and employers find fit in, for example, a position, role, or occupation, competencies provide additional benefits to organizations and the people who work, or want to work, for them. In terms of human resources applications, competency models are also helpful in improving job design, recruitment, selection,

performance appraisal, career planning, training, development, and organizational strategic planning processes (Lucia & Lepsinger, 1999; Rodriguez et al., 2002).

A competency study is additionally important for student affairs specifically. Although there is a growing amount of research on competencies needed for work in the field, current literature provides no consensus (Pope & Reynolds, 1997; Task Force on Certification, 2006). This, among other issues, has led to a "field that has been unable to embody attributes that distinguish it as a *bona fide* 'profession' . . . . [and that] has been beset by challenges of accountability and acceptability since its inception" (Beatty & Stamatakos, 1990, p. 221).

While practitioners and student affairs professional associations have yet to agree on a set of standard competencies, many (including Baier, 1979; Fey, 1991; Gordon, Strode, & Mann, 1993; Herdlein, 2004; Kane, 1982; Lovell & Kosten, 2000; Miller & Prince, 1976; Pope & Reynolds, 1997; Young & Coldwell, 1993), through research and/or experience, have identified those essential for work in the field. That being said, there is little *current* research on profession-wide competencies. In fact, even though there have been several studies conducted in the 2000s, most of those in Lovell and Kosten's meta-analysis of 30 years of student affairs competency research were completed in the 1980s.

Why Study Entry-Level Competencies?

Some competency literature (Burkard, Cole, Ott, & Stoflet, 2005; Domeier, 1977; Hyman, 1988; Kretovics, 2002; Kuk et al., 2007; Minetti, 1977; Newton & Richardson, 1976; Ostroth, 1981; Robertson, 1999; Saidla, 1990; Waple, 2006) has focused

specifically on entry-level positions within student affairs. According to Burkard et al., though, "surprisingly little research has focused on . . . the skills, competencies, or knowledge bases" (p. 284) important for entry-level work. While admittedly more literature and research on entry-level competencies existed, Lovell and Kosten (2000), in their meta-analysis of research from 1967 to 1997, found only two such studies (Newton & Richardson; Ostroth, 1981) that matched their search parameters.

Like general student affairs competency studies, with the exception of a few recent ones (Kuk et al., 2007; Waple, 2006), most entry-level competency research is not current. As stated previously, there is also a lack of consensus about these competencies (Herdlein, 2004; Kuk et al.). Kuk et al. believe that consensus is important because:

> Establishing a common understanding of expectations related to the professional competencies of entry-level practitioners could aide [*sic*] both preparation programs and student affairs supervisors in assuring that new practitioners are capable of meeting the demands and expectations related to their new roles in working with students as part of an administrative unit. Such an understanding could move the profession closer to developing a set of core competencies or an agreed upon curricular core related to master's level student affairs preparation. (p. 665)

According to Bennett (1959), "the selection of first-level managers *provides the raw material from which all later selections are made*" (p. 53). In student affairs, most mid-level managers are promoted from entry-level positions (Johnsrud & Rosser, 2000). Subsequently, many upper-level administrators are promoted from mid-level positions (Mills, 2000). And while some practitioners (Bloland, 1979/1994; Lunsford, 1984) have previously questioned the necessity of a student affairs background for upper-level administrators (and specifically, SSAOs), "if they have acquired such skills while rising through [student affairs] middle management positions or by training it would

[nonetheless] be better to have them manage a student affairs program than professional administrators with no experience in student affairs" (Bloland, p. 491). Therefore, if many of today's entry-level student affairs practitioners can become tomorrow's upper-level administrators, it seems logical that the key to finding tomorrow's successful upper-level managers lies in finding the most qualified entry-level professionals by determining what competencies are important in entry-level positions. While the competencies necessary for work within each management level may be different or required at different proficiency levels (perhaps as a result of the difference in the nature of responsibilities), it would still seem that having a foundational competency set and experience in student affairs work would only serve as a benefit as one looks for advancement within the field. In fact, according to Carpenter, Guido-DiBrito, and Kelly (1987), competencies needed in upper-level administrative positions "have at least some application for lower-level jobs, since functions are somewhat similar and skills must be developed prior to ascension to the top" (p. 9).

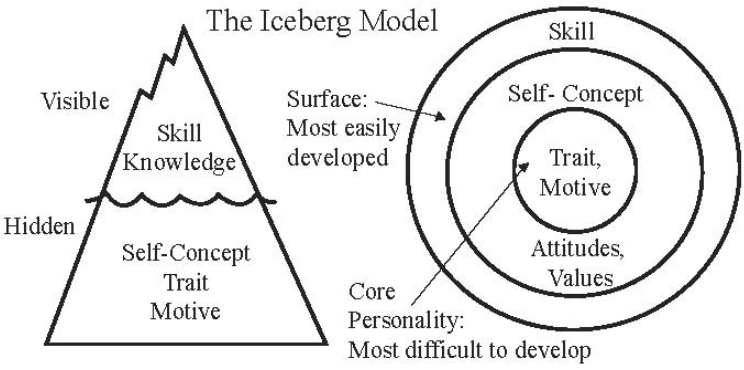
It should be noted that any list of competencies for student affairs practitioners is limited in scope by time as well as environment, including institutional type or functional area (SCPC, 2007). The collective research and literature of the past has provided some valuable information, much of which is still applicable today. However, institutions of higher education change over time, thus requiring a reexamination of the competencies that will assist student affairs professionals in fulfilling their mission of providing student services and developing students in extracurricular settings. Over the years, changes in areas such as technology and college student demographics have increased the awareness of the importance of "new" or different competencies. As a result of increased

accountability within higher education, and student affairs in particular, "the time has come for us to seriously consider what are we as student affairs professionals supposed to know and do" (SCPC, p. 2). The release of the 2007 ACPA SCPC report reaffirmed the importance of the need to study and understand this subject.

Conceptual Framework

As mentioned previously, while the concept of competence and competency in the realm of human resources arose in the late 1960s, the American competency movement gained momentum in the 1990s. During that time, Lyle and Signe Spencer (1993), whose research has led them to be considered representatives of the competence movement (Stoof, Martens, Van Merrienboer, & Bastiaens, 2002), published *Competence at Work*. In this landmark study, they reviewed 286 studies to create a list of 21 competencies that distinguish average from superior performers in an array of jobs. They defined a *competency* as "an *underlying characteristic* of an individual that is *causally related* to *criterion-referenced effective and/or superior performance* in a job or situation" (Spencer & Spencer, p. 9). They included in their definition five types of competency characteristics: knowledge, motives, self-concept, skill, and traits. The researcher selected this definition as a guide, in an effort to provide clarity to the concept of a *competency* (as discussed in chapter 2). That being said, the researcher did not, as part of this study, incorporate into the methodology the measurement of causal relationship to performance (i.e., did not measure whether, for example, a skill determined to be important caused or predicted effective or superior performance).

In describing their concept of a competency, Spencer and Spencer (1993) used the iceberg model (see Figure 1). In this model, skills and knowledge are visible (i.e., above the water level of the metaphorical iceberg) and are the easiest to teach and develop. On the other hand, traits and motives are hidden (i.e., below the water level), and are thus not as easy to teach and develop because they are connected to a person's core personality. Self-concept falls in between these two categories.



Note. From *Competence at Work* (p. 11), by L. M. Spencer and S. M. Spencer, 1993, New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc. Copyright 1993 by John Wiley & Sons, Inc. Reprinted with permission (see Appendix A).

Figure 1: Iceberg Model

If in fact skills and knowledge are more explicit than other types of competency characteristics, then it would seem intuitive that these two characteristics comprise the majority of competency models created for a position or profession, as is true in *Professional Competencies*. That is, the competencies that are identified as essential for employee performance are likely to be skills and knowledge because they are easier for people to conceptualize, define, identify, and assess than are self-concepts, traits, and

motives (Katz, 1955/1974; Liu et al., 2005; Nowlen, 1988; Spencer & Spencer, 1993). In order to create a complete competency model that can differentiate average from superior performers, however, a combination of all five types of competency characteristics is essential. Without the inclusion of self-concepts, traits, and motives, a model can only reveal a superficial view of competency.

The researcher selected this framework under the realization that it did not direct the methodology perfectly. The match between the framework and the methodology was not exact. As a result of the selection of *Professional Competencies* as the source of the competency list, the researcher only studied skills, knowledge, and a few self-concepts. As such, the iceberg model could only be utilized as a heuristic in an effort to bring human resources theory into student affairs, in the hopes of encouraging the creation of a truly comprehensive list of competencies (as discussed in chapter 5).

In conclusion, this framework deconstructed the concept of *competency* to allow the researcher to understand that it included more than just skills and knowledge, recognizing that the competencies utilized in this research were not a complete list. In addition, it allowed for the acknowledgement that all of the skills and knowledge found to be important in entry-level positions could be learned, whether through experience, professional development, or graduate study.

Significance of Study

This study determined which of the selected competencies (i.e., 66 *basic* competencies, as described in chapter 3) were important for work in entry-level positions in student affairs. It was significant for a number of reasons, including the source from

which the competencies to be studied were drawn. The 2007 *Professional Competencies* report provided the opportunity to study an old topic (i.e., competencies for student affairs) in a new way. As mentioned previously, the report was created by a committee of subject matter experts and supported by a professional association. This in and of itself added weight to the importance of the competencies that were selected for the model. Since competencies were selected for the field, regardless of management level, this study allowed the researcher to determine some of the competencies necessary for entry-level work specifically. Since it was written without regard to functional area, it also allowed the researcher to determine if different competencies were needed for entry-level work in, for example, student activities as compared to residence life. And since it was written without consideration for variation in institutional type, it allowed the researcher to determine if different competencies were needed for entry-level work at, for example, a four-year public institution compared to a four-year private institution. As indicated previously (and reinforced in chapter 2), competency research and literature on these three areas (i.e., entry-level work, entry-level work by functional area, and entry-level work by institutional type) were not current and/or almost non-existent.

While results are useful to all student affairs professionals, four groups have a special interest in this type of information: mid-managers (who typically coordinate entry-level hiring and serve as their supervisors), student affairs graduate preparation program faculty members (who teach those about to enter into entry-level positions), students in graduate preparation programs, and entry-level professionals themselves.

The first group, mid-level managers, must understand what these competencies are in order to select the candidates who are most likely to perform specific job

responsibilities successfully, based on their possession of certain competencies. Selecting the most talented and capable staff is, according to Dalton (2003), "one of the most important functions of student affairs leaders" (p. 407). During a time when students and institutions of higher education expect accountability for programs and services, staff selection becomes an even more important function. Additionally, by knowing what competencies are important for entry-level work, supervisors can create meaningful and appropriate professional development opportunities to help their entry-level staff members succeed and feel more comfortable in fulfilling the responsibilities of their current positions.

The second group with a vested interest in entry-level competency research is the graduate faculty of student affairs graduate preparation programs. What is taught in a master's program should be consistent with the competencies needed to serve in entry-level positions. Unfortunately, some research (Ostroth, 1981; Saidla, 1990) has shown that several of the more valued skills and knowledge taught in preparation programs (e.g., assessment, consultation, and understanding of higher education) are among the least important competencies identified for work in entry-level positions. If faculty members are not teaching the skills, knowledge, and values necessary for success at the entry level, they are not adequately preparing their students for their first positions. By knowing what competencies are important for entry-level performance, faculty members can adjust their courses of study to prepare these new professionals for entry into the field.

It is important for the third group, students in these preparation programs, to have an awareness of the skills, knowledge, traits, motives, and self-concepts that will help them succeed in their roles following graduation. Not only could graduate students focus

on becoming competent in specific areas during the course of their program, but they could, as graduation approaches, be more purposeful in searching for and selecting jobs for which they possess the important competencies.

Finally, entry-level practitioners benefit from the information generated by this research. Any employee who lacks the ability to perform job responsibilities may experience—among other things—stress, inconsistent performance, and job turnover (Gibson, Ivancevich, Donnelly, & Konopaske, 2006). Those currently in entry-level positions, knowing which competencies are important for their work, may then participate in professional development activities in order to master specific competencies, especially as they relate to their functional area of work and institutional type.

Research Questions

Within this study, the following research questions were addressed utilizing the basic competencies listed in *Professional Competencies*:

1. To what degree are the competencies important for work in entry-level positions, according to entry-level practitioners?
2. What difference, if any, exists in the degree to which the competencies are important for work in entry-level positions, according to entry-level practitioners who work in different functional areas?
3. What difference, if any, exists in the degree to which the competencies are important for work in entry-level positions, according to entry-level practitioners who work in different institutional types?

Limitations

As with any study, there were limitations. As discussed further in chapter 3, one limitation related to the sample selection, which was done utilizing the membership of ACPA. First, not all student affairs professionals are members of ACPA. As a result, not all population members were included in the sample. Second, outdated records led to the inability to reach sample members and the accidental inclusion or exclusion of population members within the sample. Third, a position considered entry-level at one institution may be considered mid-level at another institution. As a result of the previous two factors, some practitioners either may have participated in the study when they should not or not participated when they should. Using the instrument as a screening mechanism (as described in chapter 3) should have decreased the chances of the second factor playing a significant role in the study.

Obviously, the results are only applicable to entry-level, not mid- or upper-level, positions at four-year public and four-year private institutions, as competencies (or required competency proficiency) are likely to differ at each level of management and at two-year institutions. It is also important to point out that each participant was unique in both experience and education. While a master's degree in a student affairs or related area has become more of an expectation in entry-level hiring (Kretovics, 2002), not all entry-level professionals have a master's degree, much less one in a student affairs or related area. This phenomenon may have altered the perceptions of some entry-level practitioners. In an effort to determine if there was a difference in perception, the researcher elicited participant education level (i.e., highest degree earned and whether it was in a student affairs or related area). That being the case, the researcher neither

determined *where* the competencies were learned nor the *level of perceived proficiency* of the competencies.

With any survey comes the possibility of response bias. In this study, participants could have answered how they thought they should (i.e., given socially acceptable responses) or with the degree to which they believed the competencies to be important for work in the field, as opposed to the degree to which they believed the competencies to be important for work in their *current positions*. Non-response bias could have also played a role in the results, since: (a) responders may have been systematically different from non-responders, and (b) ACPA members, who served as the population for this study (as discussed in chapter 3), may have been systematically different from non-ACPA members.

Next, the researcher only studied the *basic* level competencies in the *Professional Competencies* report (as discussed in chapter 3). The researcher did not study competencies in the *intermediate* or *advanced* proficiency levels. In addition, the researcher did not attempt to elicit additional competencies outside of those listed by the SCPC; therefore, the competencies studied were limited to those indentified in the report. As a result of these two circumstances, it is possible that there could be additional competencies considered to be important for those serving in entry-level positions.

As mentioned previously, the match between the proposed methodology and selected conceptual framework and competency definition was imperfect. While it did attempt to bring theory outside of the "familiar sources such as the disciplines of human development, developmental psychology, organizational behavior, counseling psychology, and sociology" (McEwen, 2003, p. 155) into a traditionally atheoretical field

(R. Cintrón, personal communication, August, 13, 2009), it nonetheless left several questions unanswered, including whether a studied skill or knowledge base does in fact *predict* performance in an entry-level student affairs position.

Finally, while it makes sense to ask the people performing the actual job functions (i.e., entry-level practitioners) what competencies are needed for their work, it should be noted that this may be a limitation in that entry-level workers, new to their positions and/or to work in the field, may not have truly realized or understood the competencies they needed to perform effectively. According to Waple (2006), "it is possible that perceptions of the necessity for specific skills change as a professional becomes more experienced and enters positions of greater responsibility" (p. 15). Additionally, graduate preparation program faculty members and professionals in the different management levels may also differ in their perceptions of competencies important for entry-level work (Saidla, 1990), perhaps as a result of their personal experience and/or time removed from serving in an entry-level position. For this reason, in spite of the aforementioned limitations, the researcher chose to survey entry-level professionals in this study.

Organization of the Dissertation

Chapter 1 of the dissertation provides a brief overview of the study, including the purpose and need for the study, definitions of key terms, the conceptual framework, what questions the researcher attempted to answer, and limitations for the study. Chapter 2 provides an explanation of the development of student affairs within higher education, discussion of the competency movement in the United States, and a comprehensive review of the literature on student affairs competencies (with a focus on entry-level

positions). Chapter 3 outlines the methodology used to research competencies in entry-level positions in student affairs, while chapter 4 provides an analysis of the data collected. Finally, chapter 5 consists of a discussion of the findings, along with recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides a review of the literature relevant to the current study. It begins with a brief history of the field of student affairs in higher education. Discussion then moves into the concept of competencies, including information on the history of competencies, competency models, and a variety of methods and processes by which to create competency models. The chapter concludes with a review of student affairs competencies, including those that are profession-wide and those that are specific to entry-level positions.

Student Affairs in Higher Education

In order to provide an understanding of the field under study, including some of the changes that have warranted a modification in competencies needed for work within it, the researcher will provide a brief history of student affairs. Student affairs in American higher education, as it exists today, "refers to the administrative unit on a college campus responsible for those out-of-classroom staff members, programs, functions, and services that contribute to the education and development of students" (Javinar, 2000, p. 85). It is a field that encompasses a variety of functional areas—including career services, student activities, financial aid, residence life, and disability services—that promote the holistic development of college students.

The role of modern day student affairs has developed and evolved over time, "influenced by changing religious, economic, social, and political forces" (Nuss, 2003, p. 65). For example, the purpose of colonial colleges, which were residential and religiously affiliated, was to educate the citizens of the new society. Faculty members of colonial

colleges served as disciplinarians, and *in loco parentis*—the notion of the college serving as the authority in lieu of the parents—was strong.

Extracurricular activities, including literary societies and debate clubs, began to emerge by the mid-19th century as a student response to a strict campus environment (Nuss, 2003). Around the 1860s until almost 1900, as a result of many faculty members receiving their collegiate training from German universities, American colleges began to focus solely on the academic training of students, thus beginning a period in which colleges disregarded student issues outside of the classroom (Rentz, 2004; Rhatigan, 2000). Enrollment by women and African Americans increased dramatically as the Morrill Acts of 1862 and 1890 established public land-grant colleges and publicly funded, racially segregated colleges. Near the end of the 19th century, the introduction of *dean* positions (or other personnel specifically charged with handling students' nonacademic issues) coincided with "growing demands on college presidents, changing faculty roles and expectations, and the increase in coeducation and women's colleges" (Nuss, p. 67). By this time, faculty involvement in student life outside of the classroom had ended and the "student personnel" movement began in part as a counter reaction to the German influence (Rentz, 2004).

In the first few decades of the 20th century, administrators began to realize that extracurricular activities were developing without supervision or assistance and that they "needed to give more attention to students' social, emotional, and physical development" (Lucas, 1994, p. 203). As a result, a variety and number of student personnel positions—including registrars, admissions directors (Rudolph, 1990), dormitory monitors, academic and career counselors, financial aid assistants, fraternity and sorority advisors, and

student activity advisors (Lucas)—emerged on campus. These workers were "devoted to providing programs and services required to help students derive the maximum benefit from their undergraduate experience, both in and out of classroom" (Rentz, 2004, p. 40). In an effort to train these new workers, Columbia University's Teachers College started the first student affairs graduate preparation program around 1910 (Nuss, 2003). Practitioners, via newly formed professional associations, began creating philosophies and values statements for the field. The American Council on Education's *The Student Personnel Point of View* (1937/1994), what many student affairs practitioners believe to be the foundation document for student affairs work (National Association of Student Personnel Administrators [NASPA], 1989; Rentz, 2004), became the field's first statement of philosophy and purpose. It called for a focus on the whole student, both inside *and* outside of the classroom. A new position, that of *vice president for student affairs*, arose as a result of the increasing recognition of student personnel work as a major part of institutional operation (Rhatigan, 2000). The field continued to thrive through the 1940s and 1950s.

In the 1960s, however, the field experienced a bit of an "identity crisis," largely as a result of racial tension, student activism, civil disobedience, and the abolition of the notion of in loco parentis (Rentz, 2004). The abolition of in loco parentis by the courts changed the "emphasis on the student affairs professional's role as disciplinarian or authority figure . . . [to that] of coordinator and educator" (Nuss, 2003, p. 74), necessitating a re-examination of the role of student personnel work so that it could maintain its practicality within higher education (Henry, 1985). This period of reflection resulted in the emergence of the "student development" movement in the late 1960s.

Institutions of higher education began to see increased student diversity in the 1970s as a result of legislation that called for the end of discrimination. This change brought about an increase in the need for specialized roles in student affairs, including financial aid and support services for the students who had, up to that point, been significantly underrepresented in higher education (Nuss).

The development of the field continued into the 1980s, with the creation of the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS), a group that, as of 2010, included almost 40 higher education professional associations. CAS produced its first book of standards in 1986, incorporating 19 functional areas of higher education services. Student affairs practitioners in the 1990s saw an "increased emphasis on making connections between learning inside and outside the traditional classroom" (Nuss, 2003, p. 81), and a rejuvenation of the emphasis for the need of student affairs and academic affairs to collaborate to make these connections and to increase student learning and development. Several associational and inter-associational statements, including *Reasonable Expectations: Renewing the Educational Compact Between Institutions and Students* (NASPA, 1995), the *Student Learning Imperative* (American College Personnel Association [ACPA], 1996), *Principles of Good Practice for Student Affairs* (ACPA & NASPA, 1998), and *Powerful Partnerships: A Shared Responsibility for Learning* (American Association for Higher Education [AAHE], ACPA, & NASPA, 1998), exemplified this increased focus and renewal of philosophy for the field. As it did in the 1970s, increased student body diversity again affected higher education and was followed by a concentration on providing services and support to "new" groups of students,

including non-traditional students; graduate and professional school students; and gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender students (Nuss).

Starting in the 1990s and continuing into the 2000s, student affairs professional associations drew attention to the importance of the assessment of student learning, perhaps as an attempt to secure the necessity of the field during times of increasing accountability and decreasing budgets. The inter-associational *Learning Reconsidered* (Keeling, 2004) and its follow-up, *Learning Reconsidered 2* (Keeling, 2006), addressed the need for student affairs professionals to move beyond the acceptance or assumption that students were learning in extracurricular settings and to *prove* that students were in fact learning by assessing the outcomes of their involvement.

The field of student affairs celebrated its 100th anniversary near the turn of the 21st century (Woodard & Komives, 1990). While the field has made numerous gains in establishing its purpose over the last century, it still is yet to be fully developed and accepted within higher education. According to Rentz (1996), "student affairs' future role, its mission and goals continue to be the subject of considerable debate, now as they have been since the early 1900s" (p. 53).

Competencies

History of the Competency Movement

The concepts of *competence* and *competencies* can be traced back several centuries to the time of medieval guilds, in which apprentices learned trade skills from their masters (Horton, 2000; McLagan, 1997). That being said, the *modern* concepts of competence and competencies within the field of human resources have existed since at

least the late 1960s (Draganidis & Mentzas, 2006; Liu, Ruan, & Xu, 2005), and are based on the work of a number of experts, including David McClelland, Patricia McLagan, Richard Boyatzis, Lyle and Signe Spencer, and C. K. Prahalad and Gary Hamel (Rothwell & Lindholm, 1999).

Often called the father of the American competence movement (Rothwell & Lindholm, 1999), David McClelland published "Testing for Competence Rather Than Intelligence" in 1973. In this pioneering document, he questioned the appropriateness of attempting to predict successful job performance based on intelligence and aptitude testing, suggesting instead that skills testing served as a better predictor. McClelland's change in thinking is often cited as the initiation of the modern competency movement in the United States (US; Athey & Orth, 1999; Liu et al., 2005; Rodriguez, Patel, Bright, Gregory, & Gowing, 2002; Rothwell & Lindholm). While McClelland's prominence in the psychology and human resources worlds are undeniable, that is not to say that his work has not gone unchallenged. Specifically, Gerald Barrett and Robert Depinet are frequently cited in competency literature as questioning the validity of McClelland's work (Athey & Orth), providing support that "leads to the inevitable conclusion that intelligence tests and aptitude tests are positively related to job success" (Barrett & Depinet, 1991, p. 1015).

Another pioneer in the American competence movement was Richard Boyatzis, whose 1982 *The Competent Manager: A Model for Effective Performance* "has proven to be a foundational source for most scholarly pursuits related to competencies since that time" (Harkins, 2007, p. 8), likely because it was the first "empirically-based and fully-researched book on competency model development" (Rothwell & Lindholm, 1999, p.

93). The purpose of Boyatzis' (1982) study was to produce a generic list of competencies that measured a manger's effective performance. He also distinguished between *competencies*, which are connected to effective or superior job performance, and *threshold competencies* (e.g., the ability to read), which are "*essential to performing a job, but [are] . . . not related to superior job performance*" (Boyatzis, 1982, p. 23). His research of over 2,000 managers in 12 different organizations produced six competency clusters: Goal and Action Management, Leadership, Human Resource Management, Directing Subordinates, Focus on Others, and Specialized Knowledge. Within these clusters, 19 individual competencies (7 of which were threshold) were found to be essential for success in managerial positions (Boyatzis, 1982). In addition, he found that "for entry level managers, competencies in the Goal and Action Management cluster and the Directing Subordinates cluster are of primary importance to the performance of their jobs, and to their effectiveness" (Boyatzis, 1982, p. 219).

The next significant contribution to American competency literature came in 1990 with C. K. Prahalad and Gary Hamel's move away from the focus on individual competencies and performance towards a focus on organizational competencies and performance. They introduced the concept of *core competencies*, "the collective learning in the organization" (Prahalad & Hamel, 1990, p. 82). Just as competencies play an important role in an individual's performance, Prahalad and Hamel believe that core competencies play an important role in an organization's performance. According to Shippmann et al. (2000), "their work mirrors, at an organizational level, the identification of fundamental (and unique) KSAOs [knowledge, skills, abilities, and other

characteristics] that drive an organization's ability to rapidly change and innovate in response to new and changing markets" (p. 712).

In 1993, Lyle and Signe Spencer, also considered pioneers in the competence movement, published *Competence at Work: Models for Superior Performance*. As mentioned in chapter 1, Spencer and Spencer presented the concept of competencies through the framework of the iceberg model, noting that some characteristics (e.g., knowledge and skills) tend to be more visible and apparent, while others (e.g., self-concepts, traits, and motives) are more hidden and connected to a person's core personality. They also discussed how to create competency models and provided a "generic competency dictionary for the 21 competencies found most often to differentiate superior from average performers in 286 studies of middle- to upper-level jobs" (p. ix). Their competencies were grouped into seven clusters: Achievement and Action, Helping and Human Service, Impact and Influence, Managerial, Cognitive, Personal Effectiveness, and Other Personal Characteristics and Competencies. Finally, they detailed generic competency models for jobs in specific types of fields (e.g., sales, helping and service, technical and professional). For those superior workers in helping and human service jobs (e.g., student affairs and teaching positions), Spencer and Spencer's generic model focused on 13 individual competencies as the most important: "impact and influence" in the Impact and Influence cluster; "developing others," "teamwork and cooperation," and "directiveness/assertiveness" in the Managerial cluster; "interpersonal understanding" and "customer service orientation" in the Helping and Human Service cluster; "self-confidence," "self-control," and "flexibility" in the Personal Effectiveness cluster; "professional expertise," "analytical thinking," and "conceptual

thinking" in the Cognitive cluster; and "initiative" in the Achievement and Action cluster. While it seems intuitive that the Helping and Human Service cluster would be most prominent within helping and human services positions, that is not what they found. They speculated that this was because (a) these may be considered threshold competencies for these types of jobs and were therefore not included in the models studied, and (b) many competencies were unique to specific jobs and therefore not included in this, a generic list.

In the US, competencies began to dominate the human resources literature in the 1990s (Le Deist & Winterton, 2005). It was during that time that Patricia McLagan stated that "organizations have been dabbling in competency models and systems for generations. There has been a surge in the past 30 years that has taken unique directions in the US and other highly developed nations" (1997, p. 47). Since the 1990s, competency-based human resources applications have become prevalent in the US (Le Deist & Winterton). By 2000, between 75% and 80% of companies utilized at least one competency-related application (Shippmann et al., 2000). As of 2008, "almost every organization with more than 300 people uses some form of competency-based human resource management" (Boyatzis, 2008, p. 5).

What Are Competencies?

Since the beginning of the interest of competencies in the realm of work functioning, there have been countless definitions, both formal and informal, proposed by researchers, educators, professionals, and laypeople alike. According to Rothwell and Lindholm (1999), "not everyone uses the terms competence [and] competency . . . in

precisely the same way" (p. 103). In fact, "there is a wide range of definitions, even among a fairly homogenous expert population, underscoring the difficulty of pinpointing a standard definition of the term" (Shippmann et al., 2000, p. 707). As such, there is substantial confusion concerning the concepts (Boyatzis, 1982; Horton, 2000; Le Deist & Winterton, 2005; Shippmann et al.).

The concept of a *competency* has changed over time. The definition changes by context, field, purpose, and person. For example, "some definitions relate to the work—tasks, results, and outputs. Others describe the characteristics of the people doing the work—knowledge, skills, and attitudes (also values, orientations, and commitments). A hybrid often mixes those two kinds of definitions" (McLagan, 1997, p. 41). Commonly cited definitions include (a) "a generic knowledge, skill, trait, self-schema, or motive of a person that is causally related to effective behavior referenced to external performance criteria" (Klemp, 1979, p. 42); (b) a characteristic "that . . . [is] causally related to effective and/or superior performance in a job" (Boyatzis, 1982, p. 23); (c) an "*underlying characteristic* of an individual that is *causally related* to *criterion-referenced effective and/or superior performance* in a job or situation" (Spencer & Spencer, 1993, p. 9); (d) "a cluster of related knowledge, skills and attitudes . . . that affects a major part of one's job (a role or responsibility), that correlates with performance on the job, that can be measured against well-accepted standards, and that can be improved via training and development" (Parry, 1996, p. 50); (e) "a knowledge, skill, ability, or characteristic, associated with high performance in a job" (Mirabile, 1997, p. 75); and (f) a "measurable pattern of knowledge, skills, abilities, behaviors and other characteristics that an individual needs to perform work roles or occupational functions successfully" (United

States Office of Personnel Management, n.d., ¶ 1). These six expert definitions comprise a small portion of the seemingly endless number of definitions that have been listed in the literature.

One of the most significant differentiating factors within competency definitions is what characteristics are included. Even here, many researchers and practitioners have opposing beliefs about the inclusion of specific characteristics. Definitions can include traits (Boyatzis, 1982; Klemp, 1979; Marrelli, Tondora, & Hoge, 2005; Rothwell & Lindholm, 1999; Spencer & Spencer, 1993); attitudes (Athey & Orth, 1999; Marrelli et al.; Noe, 2002; Parry, 1996; Rothwell & Lindholm); abilities (Marrelli et al.; Mirabile, 1997; Pottinger, 1979; Rothwell & Lindholm; United States Office of Personnel Management, n.d.); motives (Boyatzis, 1982; Klemp; Spencer & Spencer); behaviors (Athey & Orth; United States Office of Personnel Management, n.d.); self-concept, self-image, or self-schema (Boyatzis, 1982; Klemp; Spencer & Spencer); and characteristics such as values (Marrelli et al.; Noe) and beliefs (Rothwell & Lindholm). While the inclusion of characteristics varies from definition to definition, the two that seem to be consistently utilized in competency definitions are *knowledge* and *skills*.

As each definition of a *competency* differs, so too does the definition of the characteristics. For example, a *skill* has been defined as (a) the "ability to demonstrate a set of related behaviors or processes" (Klemp, 1979, p. 42), (b) the "ability to demonstrate a system and sequence of behavior that . . . [is] functionally related to attaining a performance goal" (Boyatzis, 1982, p. 33), (c) the "ability to perform a certain physical or mental task" (Spencer & Spencer, 1993, p. 11), and (d) "an observable competence to perform a learned psychomotor act" (United States Office of Personnel

Management, 2007, p. 194). These are only four of a countless number of definitions of one characteristic of a competency.

Add to this the variety of possible combinations of characteristics that researchers and practitioners include as types of competencies, and one can see why confusion around this topic abounds. This inconsistency is likely why Le Deist and Winterton (2005) believe that "it is impossible to identify or impute a coherent theory or to arrive at a definition capable of accommodating and reconciling all the different ways that the term is used" (p. 29). However, "there is one underlying theme that seems to be present in the literature; the research and writing about competencies in the workplace is all about understanding and improving human behavior and therefore, organizational performance" (Harkins, 2007, p. 2).

For the purpose of this study, the author chose to utilize Spencer and Spencer's (1993) definition of *competency* as an "*underlying characteristic* of an individual that is *causally related* to *criterion-referenced effective and/or superior performance* in a job or situation" (p. 9). This definition was chosen because it has been cited frequently in human resources literature and because the researcher found no generally accepted definition within student affairs literature. As many definitions of competency exist in the field of human resources, so do they in student affairs.

Spencer and Spencer further clarify the components of the definition:

> *Underlying characteristic* means the competency is a fairly deep and enduring part of a person's personality and can predict behavior in a wide variety of situations and job tasks. *Causally related* means that a competency *causes* or *predicts* behavior and performance. *Criterion-referenced* means that a competency actually predicts who does something well or poorly, as measured on a *specific criterion* or standard. (p. 9)

They include five types of underlying characteristics: knowledge, motives, self-concepts, skills, and traits. In other words, in order for a capability to be deemed a competency, it must be categorized as having one of these five characteristics (e.g., knowledge of college student development theory) and causing positive performance on a performance outcome. While this definition provides some clarity to the concept of a *competency*, the researcher recognizes the limitations of its use (as discussed in chapter 1).

Uses of Competencies

Competencies provide benefits to organizations and the people who work, or want to work, for them. The use of competencies within human resources has become extensive in the United States and is predicted to continue to influence human resources practice into the future (Athey & Orth, 1999). In terms of human resources applications, competency models (discussed later) are helpful in improving job design, recruitment, selection, reward, promotion, performance appraisal, career planning, training, development, and organizational strategic planning processes (Boyatzis, 1982; Cooper, 2000; Lucia & Lepsinger, 1999; Rodriguez et al., 2002). Competency-based human resources applications can increase productivity (Spencer & Spencer, 1993) and can "improve individual, team, and organizational performance" (Athey & Orth, p. 224).

Of particular interest to the current study is competency-based selection, which is based on the notion that the better the fit between employee competencies and job requirements (i.e., job-fit) is, the higher the employee job performance (Caldwell & O'Reilly, 1990; Spencer & Spencer, 1993), retention (Spencer & Spencer), and job satisfaction (Caldwell & O'Reilly; Kristof-Brown, et al., 2005) will be. Furthermore,

employees with better job-fit "intrinsically enjoy their work more, which produces a better organizational climate" (Spencer & Spencer, p. 240). Finally, according to Spencer and Spencer, competency-based selection is advantageous in that it eliminates selection bias based on race, age, gender, culture, or credentials.

Development of an Individual's Competencies

For the most part, competencies can be developed within individuals. The means by which and the ease with which competencies are developed vary by competency characteristic (i.e., motive, trait, self-concept, knowledge, and skill). The latter issue is most easily demonstrated by Spencer and Spencer's (1993) iceberg model (see Figure 1 in chapter 1).

The cross-section of the metaphorical iceberg shows that knowledge and skills both exist on the outer layer, indicating the relative ease in developing them. As such, both knowledge and skills may be developed by training (Griffiths & King, 1986; Harvey, 1991; Spencer & Spencer, 1993), formal education (Griffiths & King), experience (Griffiths & King), and practice (Harvey).

In contrast, traits and motives exist within the innermost layer of the iceberg, indicating the highest level of developmental difficulty. These two characteristics are typically viewed as inherent (Athey & Orth, 1999), occurring naturally (Mirabile, 1997), and central to a person's personality (Spencer & Spencer, 1993). That being said, the literature does generally indicate the ability to modify or alter traits and motives, or at least the behaviors related to them. For example, while "it might be difficult . . . for a person lacking empathy to develop that trait, . . . empathetic *behaviors* [italics added]

such as listening to customers' needs or addressing their concerns, can be fostered" (Lucia & Lepsinger, 1999, p. 7). For the most part, though, traits and motives themselves are "not amenable to significant change through training" (Parry, 1996, p. 50).

Finally, the competency characteristic of self-concept comprises the middle layer of the iceberg, with the developmental difficulty lying in the middle of the continuum between knowledge and skills and traits and motives. Self-concept (including attitudes, values, and self-image) may be developed or altered via training (Griffiths & King, 1986; Spencer & Spencer, 1993), psychotherapy (Spencer & Spencer), and experience (Griffiths & King; Marrelli et al., 2005; Spencer & Spencer).

As indicated previously, competency-based selection practices are useful to organizations. Not all competency characteristics are equally useful within these processes, however. In terms of creating effective human resources practices, it seems intuitive that since self-concept, motives, and traits are inherent and difficult to develop, organizations should, in an ideal world, select candidates based on the presence of these three characteristics. If organizations can select employees who possess these hard-to-teach characteristics, they can then spend time training employees for specific, position-related knowledge and skills (Spencer & Spencer, 1993).

Competency Models

When competencies are identified for an organization or occupation/profession, they are typically grouped into a *competency model*, "an organizing framework that lists the competencies required for effective performance" (Marrelli et al., 2005, p. 537). Similar to the way the term *competencies* has been defined and utilized in a variety of

ways, *competency model* has been defined and utilized differently by a variety of people, thus adding to the existing confusion surrounding the general topic. The selection for the focus of the model, along with the method by which it is created and structured, results in endless combinations of options in which to build models.

Focus

One way in which competency models vary is the focus, that is, for whom or what the competencies are intended to distinguish effective or superior performance. The focus can be narrow, for example, based on a specific position (Lucia & Lepsinger, 1999; Marrelli et al., 2005; Parry, 1996). On the other hand, the focus may be broad, which could include a function or role (e.g., programming board advisors), a job family (e.g., positions in student activities), a specific department or organization, or an entire occupation or profession (Draganidis & Mentzas, 2006; Lucia & Lepsinger; Marrelli et al.; Rothwell & Lindholm, 1999).

Overall, the broader the focus, the more generic the competencies are likely to be in order to be applicable to the entity (i.e., department/organization or occupation/profession). Subsequently, the more generic the competencies, the more likely they are to be perceived as irrelevant to a specific position (Markus, Cooper-Thomas, & Allpress, 2005). A narrow focus, on the other hand, allows the integration of more precise competency items, tailored to a specific position. While this may be more useful to the entity, it also takes more time, effort, and money to create.

Creation

There is a variety of ways by which organizations or occupations can create their competency models (Lucia & Lepsinger, 1999; Rodriguez et al., 2002; Rothwell & Lindholm, 1999). That being the case, there appears to be three general approaches, each of which has different recommendations regarding the process by which the models are created.

The first approach involves borrowing or purchasing a model from another entity, such as another organization or a consultant, "without any tailoring whatsoever to take into account the organization's unique . . . culture, customers, and market conditions" (Rothwell & Lindholm, 1999, p. 97). As a result, it is the least valid in terms of utilization within the organization. This is the approach that an organization's leaders would likely take if they were looking for the easiest, quickest, and cheapest means by which to create a model (Rothwell & Lindholm).

The next approach involves modifying an existing model to meet the unique cultural aspects or local conditions of the organization (Rothwell & Lindholm, 1999; Zemke & Zemke, 1999). In terms of ease of creation, timeliness, and cost, this approach does not provide as much appeal as the former. The benefit over the borrowed or purchased approach, however, is increased validity and utility for the organization (Rifkin, Fineman, & Ruhnke, 1999).

The third approach frequently mentioned in the literature is to create a model from scratch. Of the three approaches, this one allows for the most valid application for an organization because it is tailored to the organization's specific needs. As a result, though, it is typically the most costly in terms of money, resources, and time. According

to Rothwell and Lindholm (1999), this approach is essential "when the organization's decision-makers plan to use competency models as a basis for making such important employment decisions as selecting, terminating, or promoting" (p. 97), as it is the most legally defensible.

The creation method or process selected by an entity depends on a variety of factors, including human resources (i.e., if the organization employs someone knowledgeable in competencies), time, budget, and desired use (e.g., if it will be used as a selection tool). Regardless of the method or process chosen, the most important outcome is that the "competencies identified and organized in the model represent those capabilities needed to competently perform a job" (Harkins, 2007, p. 27). In this way, the competencies that distinguish average from successful performers can be determined and organized according to the needs of the organization.

Data Collection

The competencies seen as important for effective work in a certain position or occupation may be determined through one or more of a number of different processes. When an organization's leadership decides to create a model from scratch or to modify an existing model, it has a variety of options by which to collect data and a number of options regarding who to involve in that collection. Organizations should use at least two different data collection methods (Marrelli et al., 2005) and include a variety of perspectives, including those of the person or people in the position, their supervisor or supervisors, subject matter experts, and when possible, human resources specialists (Parry, 1996). According to Russ-Eft (1995), "only by gathering perspectives from

different people in a job [or occupation] can a comprehensive picture of the needed competencies emerge" (p. 334).

In terms of data collection, the author will briefly review several of the more commonly discussed methods: focus groups (including expert panels), questionnaires, and interviews (including the structured interview and behavioral event interview). A focus group is a small collection of employees, supervisors, or customers that, through the help of a facilitator, identifies a list of competencies. Sometimes a focus group can be comprised of subject matter experts. In these *expert panels*, "persons who are considered highly knowledgeable about the job [or occupation] and its requirements meet to develop a list of the competencies required for success" (Marrelli et al., 2005, p. 546). Compared to other methods, focus groups can be less expensive, quicker, and can help the organization develop support for the study and its findings (Marrelli et al.). A disadvantage is that it can sometimes be difficult to organize the member gatherings. In the case of expert panels, because the members are not necessarily directly in touch with the position or occupational requirements, this method can lead to competency omission and/or incorrect identification of competencies that reflect traditions or values of the organization but are not required for effective job performance (Spencer & Spencer, 1993).

In utilizing questionnaires to gather data, organizations can ask respondents to rate competency items according to importance or criticality to the position or occupation, how frequently each competency is utilized, and/or the degree to which each competency distinguishes average from superior performance (Marrelli et al., 2005; Spencer & Spencer, 1993). Questionnaires can be a quick and inexpensive form of data

collection, one that allows for employees to provide honest feedback and for the organization to build ownership for the study (Marrelli et al.; Spencer & Spencer). However, since "data are limited to items and concepts included in the survey [they] . . . often miss competencies not included by those who constructed the survey" (Spencer & Spencer, p. 101).

A third data collection method is the interview, whereby the data collector meets with the participant in an effort to gather the information that leads to the identification of competencies. In a structured interview, questions are asked of individual employees, supervisors, or others who have familiarity with the position or occupation (Marrelli et al., 2005). An advantage of these types of interviews, compared to questionnaires, is that an interviewer can ask follow-up questions in order to delve deeper into or clarify a response, thus eliciting what could be a more accurate and thorough picture of the competencies needed for effective performance (Marrelli et al.). As a result, though, this method can be not only costly, but also extremely time consuming, from preparation through interviewing and analysis (Marrelli et al.; Mirabile, 1997).

Another type of interview used in data collection is the behavioral event interview (BEI), developed by David McClelland in the 1970s. In this approach, employees identified as average or superior are asked to provide highly detailed descriptions of three successful and unsuccessful incidents that they have experienced in their positions (McClelland, 1993). The data are then analyzed to determine what competencies differentiate the average and superior performers in that job. According to Spencer and Spencer (1993), an advantage of this method is an outcome of:

> Very specific descriptions of effective and ineffective job behaviors that can show and teach others what to do—and what not to do—on the job. A significant by-product of these interviews is a wealth of lively short stories about job situations and problems that can be used to develop relevant case studies, simulations, and role plays for training. (p. 98-99)

Like structured interviews, this process is very time consuming and expensive. Due to the focus on successful and unsuccessful situations, the BEI may not elicit competencies for the more "ordinary" incidents that occur (Marrelli et al., 2005; Spencer & Spencer). As a result, some competencies may be missed in the process. Finally, some competencies important for a position may not be detected if both average and superior performers have them (Russ-Eft, 1995).

As with other aspects of competency modeling, the method by which data are collected can vary, depending on such factors as the focus and approach to creation. The organizational budget, time, and expertise level in data collection methods within the organization also play a role in the method or methods utilized.

Structure

The structure, or format, is another way by which competency models differ. First, they vary by the quantity of competencies included within the model. The recommended number of competencies varies, typically ranging from 10 to 30 (Cooper, 2000; Emiliani, 2003; Parry, 1996, 1998). While some practitioners and researchers believe that the number of competencies should be limited, others believe that having more can be just as effective. For example, "organizations have implemented very effective systems with seventy or more" (Cooper, p. 100).

In order to increase simplification of design and application, competencies within a model are often grouped into clusters or categories of related competencies (e.g., Advising and Helping, as grouped in *Professional Competencies*; Cooper, 2000; Mirabile, 1997). As with the quantity of individual competencies, the quantity of clusters is also debated among practitioners and researchers.

Finally, competency experts provide a variety of formatting suggestions related to what information is included within the competency listing. Some recommend the inclusion of definitions for each competency (Draganidis & Mentzas, 2006; Markus et al., 2005; Marrelli et al., 2005; Mirabile, 1997). Such definitions can ensure that there is a consistent understanding among model users. Next, some experts suggest that model creators include, for each competency, sample behaviors or performance indicators of a person who is characterized as an effective or successful performer (Cascio & Aguinis, 2005; Draganidis & Mentzas; Emiliani, 2003; Markus et al.; Marrelli et al.; Mirabile; Parry, 1996). Doing this allows for "an individual possessing . . . [a] competency . . . [to] be assessed through measurable behaviors" (United States Office of Personnel Management, 2007, p. 274). Lastly, some models organize competencies into proficiency levels (e.g., basic, intermediate, and advanced; Marrelli et al.; Mirabile; Parry, 1996; United States Office of Personnel Management, 2007). This provides for flexibility in the utility of the model by allowing gradient assessment of the possession of each individual competency.

Competency models may be formatted or organized in a variety of ways, utilizing seemingly endless combinations of characteristics (e.g., clusters, quantity, behavioral indicators, definitions, proficiency levels). While the variety of options has increased

over time (Rodriguez et al., 2002), in the end, it is the "organizational needs [that] will determine the optimal framework" (Marrelli et al., 2005, p. 537).

Professional Competencies Model

The report utilized as the basis for measuring entry-level student affairs competencies for the current research is *Professional Competencies* (available to ACPA members at www.myacpa.org; see Appendix B for the Executive Summary), proposed in 2007 by the ACPA Steering Committee on Professional Competencies (SCPC). At the time of this study, it was the most current, comprehensive listing of competencies within student affairs. The personnel focus of the model encompasses the entire field of student affairs, giving no attention to potential differences related to institutional type, functional area, or management level (i.e., entry-, mid-, or upper-level).

The approach by which this model was created most closely resembles that of creating it from scratch. The initial competency data were collected from a review of the literature conducted by a group of doctoral students, one of whom, Sarah Schoper, served on the SCPC. Through a review of 40 pieces of literature "addressing the topic of knowledge that student affairs educators need to know" (Schoper, Stimpson, & Segar, 2006, p. 3), nine themes, or areas of competency, emerged. The steering committee—comprised of student affairs professionals representing a variety of positions (including all management levels, graduate preparation program faculty members, and doctoral students), functional areas, and expertise on the topic—utilized these themes as a starting point for further discussions on competencies needed within the field.

In terms of structure, the information elicited from steering committee member discussions was synthesized, resulting in 203 competencies grouped into eight clusters: Advising and Helping; Assessment, Evaluation, and Research; Ethics; Leadership and Administration/Management; Legal Foundations; Pluralism and Inclusion; Student Learning and Development; and Teaching. The Leadership and Administration/Management cluster was further divided into four "subcompetency" areas: Resource Management, Human Resources, Organizational Development, and Social Responsibility/Civic Engagement.

Each cluster, as opposed to each individual competency, was defined. Additionally, all but one cluster (Leadership and Administration/Management) was separated into three skill levels (i.e., basic, intermediate, and advanced). In terms of distinguishing skill levels within the four Leadership and Administration/Management subcompetency areas, only Social Responsibility/Civic Engagement was separated into the three aforementioned skill levels. The other three were organized differently than all other clusters in that they provided "a sample of a basic skill ('From'), an intermediate skill ('Through'), and an advanced skill ('To')" (SCPC, 2007, p. 10), indicating examples of progression of attainment. The steering committee created these skill levels, acknowledging that individual practitioners need varying proficiency among the eight clusters depending on their functional area and institutional type.

Criticism of Competencies in General

Not everyone supports the notion of competency use within organizations. Two criticisms of the competency approach include that of standardization of the workforce

and validity (or lack thereof). With regards to the former, Markus et al. (2005) warn that the competency approach promotes "standardization [*sic*] through prescription" (p. 125). In other words, if employees and potential employees are expected to possess the same competencies, diversity will be reduced, potentially decreasing the "creativity, capacity for innovation, diversity of approaches, problem solving skills, etc." (Wood & Payne, 1998, p. 31).

The validity of the competence approach has been questioned. According to Markus et al. (2005), "there are major validity issues with the use of competency models, and as yet little evidence to support their claimed benefits" (p. 119). The authors focus on two issues, including the *need to validate* a competency model and the *types of statistical validity* (i.e., construct, content, criterion, and predictive).

While validation of the competency model is a suggested step in many model creation processes (Draganidis & Mentzas, 2006; Lucia & Lepsinger, 1999; Spencer & Spencer, 1993), not all organizations complete this step upon model adoption (Markus et al., 2005). Validation of a model, regardless of how it is created, is helpful in ensuring that the competencies deemed important do in fact predict good performance. It is *critical*, however, for an organization that borrows or purchases a model from another entity to validate the model for its specific use. Otherwise, any outcomes that result may not be attributed to the possession (or lack thereof) of specified competencies.

Even if an organization does take the time to validate its model, a challenge of ensuring construct, content, and criterion validity within the model arises from the previously discussed inconsistencies in the definition of a *competency*, in what characteristics a competency includes, and in its structure (Markus et al., 2005).

Predictive validity seems to be the focus of the most criticism, however. Several practitioners and researchers (Barrett & Depinet, 1991; Markus et al.) have questioned whether the possession of specific competencies does in fact *predict* improved performance or occupational success, citing lack of empirical evidence. Markus et al. claim that "there is a substantial, and largely unquestioned, gap between the many claims and the actual benefits measurably delivered by competency initiatives" (p. 117).

Summary

While the concept of utilizing competencies within the realm of job performance has been around for centuries, the modern concept of competencies came about around the 1960s and gained momentum in the United States in the 1990s, led by a variety of practitioners and researchers now known as experts on the topic. One of the distinguishing factors of a competency is that there is no consistency—in definition, in model structure, in model focus, in the model creation process, or in data collection. This has caused some confusion and spawned criticism of the competency approach for use within organizations. Despite the criticism, however, many believe that "competencies provide a common language and method that can integrate all human resource functions and services—selection, performance appraisal, . . . training and development, and compensation—to help people, firms, and even societies be more productive in the challenging years ahead" (Spencer & Spencer, 1993, p. 347).

Competencies for the Field of Student Affairs

Background

Student affairs exists to support the academic mission of higher education institutions (Nuss, 2003), and staff members at all levels of management play an important role in carrying out that mission. Staff members are, according to Baier (1979), a critical variable in creating and sustaining a successful student affairs organization. They have the ability to influence the success or failure of not only the functional area in which they work, but also the institution's student affairs division. As such, "student affairs professionals need the proper knowledge base, attitudes, and skills to perform their professional roles effectively" (Komives & Woodard, 1996, p. 295), and it is the responsibility of hiring entities to select the people who fulfill these criteria.

Student affairs positions are generally divided into three levels of management: upper, mid, and entry. There is no profession-wide agreement regarding the factors that define each level (D. S. Carpenter, personal communication, June 16, 2008; S. M. Janosik, personal communication, June 16, 2008), likely due to the variance in position level and responsibility from institution to institution. For the purposes of this study, an upper-level manager includes not only the *senior student affairs officer* (SSAO), the person in the highest student affairs position at an institution, but also select staff members who report directly to the SSAO (Winston, Creamer, & Miller, 2001). A mid-level manager reports either directly to the SSAO or to a person who reports directly to the SSAO (Fey, 1991), and is "responsible for the direction, control, or supervision of one or more student affairs functions and staff" (Kane, 1982, p. 9). Entry-level positions

are for practitioners who have less than five years of full-time experience within the field of student affairs and do not include supervision of other professional staff (Fey). These positions are generally the ones that students of graduate preparation programs seek upon matriculation.

Student affairs practitioners have studied or provided experienced-based opinions regarding, among other things, competencies, personality types, and leadership styles of the field's workers. They have not only applied these variables to student affairs as a whole, but many have also added specificity by concentrating on management level (Ackerman, 2007; Clement & Rickard, 1992; Fey & Carpenter, 1996; Gordon, Strode, & Mann, 1993; Kane, 1982; Kinnick & Bollheimer, 1984; Lunsford, 1984; Randall & Globetti, 1992; Sandeen, 1991; Saunders & Cooper, 1999; Wade, 1993), functional area (Allen, Julian, Stern, & Walborn, 1987; Cappeto, 1979; Greenberg, 2001; Hughs, 1983; Morton, 2003; Porter, 2005; Task Force on the Development of Core Competencies in the College Union and Student Activities Profession, 2005), and/or institutional type (Hirt, 2006; Hoyt & Rhatigan, 1968; Matson, 1977). As student affairs philosophy has changed and increased in complexity over time, the need for studying these variables, and specifically competencies, has risen. In particular, the "advent of the student development philosophy (American College Personnel Association, 1975; Council of Student Personnel Associations [COSPA], 1974; Miller & Prince, 1976) has placed increased emphasis on professional competencies" (Henry, 1985, p. 20).

Although there is a growing amount of research on competencies needed for work in the field, current "literature reveals no consensus about core competencies for student affairs practitioners" (Pope & Reynolds, 1997, p. 268). This, among other issues, has led

to a "field that has been unable to embody attributes that distinguish it as a *bona fide* 'profession' . . . . [and that] has been beset by challenges of accountability and acceptability since its inception" (Beatty & Stamatakos, 1990, p. 221). While practitioners and professional associations have yet to agree upon a set of standard competencies, many—through research and experience—have begun to identify those important for work in student affairs.

As mentioned previously, many student affairs practitioners have conducted studies on the competencies necessary for success within a specific level of management. Most of the research has targeted competencies of graduate students, mid-level professionals, and upper-level administrators. A fair, albeit growing, amount of research has identified competencies of entry-level professionals. In fact, in a meta-analysis of 30 years of literature, Lovell and Kosten (2000) found that, of the articles written on researched competencies, 22% focused on graduate students, 13% focused on mid-level professionals, and 26% focused on upper-level administrators. Only 9% of professional competency research focused on entry-level staff.

In a review of the literature, Tillotson (1995) suggested that there are two sources of writings about student affairs competencies. The first type is written by experienced practitioners who have identified competencies based on observation or opinion. The second type is written by practitioners who have identified competencies through research methods. Some studies have been based on self-perceived competencies within a management level (e.g., entry-level professionals selecting entry-level competencies), while others have been based on the perception of those outside of that management level (e.g., mid-level professionals selecting entry-level competencies). Most studies have

emphasized general competencies, applicable to either a management level or to all management levels, without regard to functional area or institutional type. While staff members in each functional area or at each type of institution may utilize specific skills, abilities, and knowledge to perform their roles effectively (SCPC, 2007), there is a variety of competencies common to all student affairs professionals.

Competencies for all Student Affairs Positions

Some previous literature, based on either the author's research or experience, has focused on general competencies necessary for work in the field, ignoring any potential difference between management levels. In 1968, ACPA commissioned a project, Tomorrow's Higher Education (THE), that served as one of the first guides for student affairs professional development and "evidence of recognition by leaders of . . . [ACPA] of the need for student affairs professionals to develop competencies leading to the facilitation of student development" (Henry, 1985, p. 2). The second phase of that project led to the development of the THE Model, which became a foundation for many future follow-up competency studies. According to this model, in order for student affairs professionals to create an environment conducive to student development, they must utilize skills in six competency categories: Goal Setting, Assessment, Instruction, Consultation, Milieu Management, and Evaluation (Miller & Prince, 1976).

Around the same time period, ACPA commissioned a related venture, the Professional Skills and Competency Identification Project, whose purpose was to identify competencies "which are (1) trainable, (2) measurable, and (3) influence student development" (Hanson, 1976, p. 3). Gary Hanson, the project director, elicited

competency ideas from ACPA leadership within the six THE Model categories. The result of this survey was the "Tentative Taxonomy of Student Development Staff Skills and Competencies," a listing of 195 competencies for student affairs staff. In a subsequent survey, Hanson found that more than half of ACPA leaders rated 62 of the items as *very important*, while they rated only 20 of the items lower than the *moderately important* or *very important* categories. Of the 19 competencies deemed *very important* by more than 70% of the respondents, 7 were in the Goal Setting category, 4 were in the Consultation category, 4 were in the Milieu Management category, 1 was in the Instruction category, and 3 were in the Assessment category. None were in the Evaluation category.

In subsequent literature, Baier (1979) suggested expertise in counseling, leadership training, group dynamics, group advising, fiscal management, legal knowledge, institutional politics, assessment and evaluation, human relations, and computer technology. In 1985, Moore (as cited in Pope & Reynolds, 1997) suggested conflict management, group dynamics, instruction, interviewing, management, problem solving, self-knowledge, supervision, verbal and written communication, and resource use as the basic student affairs competencies. In the second edition of one of the premier literary resources for the field, *Student Services: A Handbook for the Profession*, Delworth and Hanson (1989) identified five areas that, at the time, represented "a fundamental core … necessary to maintain a vital and dynamic division of student services" (p. 324). These competency areas included Assessment and Evaluation, Teaching and Training, Consultation, Counseling and Advising, and Program Development.

In 1993, Young and Coldwell conducted a study based on the ACPA and NASPA joint Task Force on Professional Preparation and Practice (1990) competencies (discussed later). "Understanding of and competence in addressing cultural diversity" and student affairs "values/ethics/philosophy" were the two highest rated competencies. Student affairs practitioners in all management levels rated all but 2 of the 10 competencies as at least *somewhat useful*. "Teaching methodology" and "history and philosophy of higher education" were the two lowest rated competencies, with student affairs practitioners rating them as only *slightly useful*. In 1995, Tillotson found that human interaction skills (e.g., relationship building, organizational understanding, and communication) were the most important for practice in the field. The following year, in the third edition of *Student Services: A Handbook for the Profession*, Komives and Woodard (1996) revisited the previous handbook's competencies and added Leadership, Mediation, Multiculturalism, Group Advising, and Research to the existing list.

To begin the new century, Woodard, Love, and Komives (2000) stressed the continued importance of "historical" student affairs competencies and also suggested the emerging importance of entrepreneurial ability, ability to attract resources, skill in assessing student learning outcomes, ability to apply multiple frames of reference, skill in adapting and applying technology, and skill in futures forecasting. In 2003, in the fourth edition of *Student Services: A Handbook for the Profession*, Komives and Woodard added Conflict Resolution and Community Building as important competencies for all student affairs practitioners. SSAOs in Herdlein's (2004) study suggested that management skills, including "budgeting" and "knowledge of politics," and human relations skills, including "work with diverse populations" and "effective

communication," were important for success in the field. In this study, "budgeting" was the most frequently stated competency within the open-ended responses. In that same year, Rybalkina (2004) surveyed SSAOs regarding the importance of 71 competencies for the field and found that "with only one exception, all competencies . . . were perceived essential/important by the majority" (p. 133). In her study, the Leadership, Diversity, and Communication clusters were deemed more important than the other clusters of Student Contact, Human Resources, Fiscal Affairs, Professional Development, Research, Legal Affairs, and Technology. In 2006, Hirt presented her pioneering research on the competencies needed for work at different types of institutions, including research universities, historically Black colleges and universities, Hispanic-serving institutions, liberal arts institutions, religiously-affiliated institutions, comprehensive institutions, and community colleges. According to Hirt, while "there are elements of student affairs administration that are similar across some institutional types, the work that professionals conduct does, in fact, differ based on where they work" (p. 185). As a result of these differences, practitioners at different types of institutions need and utilize different competencies.

In closing, the possession of knowledge of student development theory, administration and management skills, and "human facilitation [skills] . . . (e.g., counseling skills, staff supervision) . . . [appear] to be critical to the success of a student affairs professional" (Lovell & Kosten, 2000, p. 561). While practitioners, researchers, and associations have advocated for a wide variety of competencies, it seems that, without exception, previous competency literature includes "people skills" as essential for work in the field, regardless of management level, institutional type, or functional

area. Proficiency in assessment, evaluation, and/or research has also been suggested frequently in past competency literature, perhaps a result of the perceived need for practitioners to justify the existence of the field.

Competencies for Entry-Level Positions

Ostroth (1979) stated that a major source of literature (not all of which has been based on research methods) on entry-level competencies has been professional association statements that list standards for the training of student affairs practitioners, and that a "comparison of these statements reveals substantial agreement on the value of a very wide ranging list of competencies" (p. 114). Associations that have attempted to determine standards for the training (typically through graduate preparation programs) of future entry-level workers include COSPA (1964), ACPA (1967, 1979), American Personnel and Guidance Association (1969), ACPA and NASPA's Task Force on Professional Preparation and Practice (TFPPP; 1990), and CAS (1986, 2006). These statements, while related to the concept of entry-level competencies, focus more directly on the knowledge and experience needed to adequately prepare new student affairs workers for the field. Research and opinion-based suggestions on competencies needed for work in entry-level positions serve as the focus of this literature review and are summarized in Appendix C and Appendix D.

In their study of competencies needed for entry-level work, Newton and Richardson (1976) surveyed a random sample of Georgia student affairs professionals in all levels of management. After soliciting opinions regarding what competencies were essential for entry-level practitioners and then grouping like comments, they created an

instrument of 40 competencies, after which participants were asked to rank the competencies according to priority. Utilizing this Delphi technique, they discovered that the competencies given the highest priority for entry-level practitioners included skills and abilities in interpersonal relationships, organization and administration, working cooperatively with students and colleagues, increasing self-awareness, and individual and group counseling.

Domeier (1977), in a study of Michigan student affairs administrators (almost 11% of whom held entry-level positions), compiled a list of 58 competency tasks from a review of the literature and grouped them into eight clusters: Budget Management, Cooperative Relationships, Communication, Leadership, Personnel Management, Professional Development, Research and Evaluation, and Student Contact. While the responses were given by professionals *in* all levels of management *for* all levels of management, Domeier extracted a list of competencies specific to entry-level professionals. One hundred percent of all entry-level professionals surveyed either *used* or *used frequently* 20 of the 58 competencies, including the following: "analyze and interpret needs and requests" in the Budget Management cluster, "establish and utilize cooperative alliances" in the Cooperative Relationships cluster, "determine and utilize office management procedures, i.e., secretarial services, business machine operation, print and nonprint media systems" in the Communication cluster, "generate and articulate an ethical base for all procedures and interactions" in the Leadership cluster, "define and assess personal and professional developmental tasks" in the Professional Development cluster, "design and modify testing and assessment instruments" in the Research and Evaluation cluster, and "provide channels for cooperative policymaking" in the Student

Contact category. One hundred percent of entry-level respondents claimed that only one competency, to "generate a rationale and procedures for descriptive, historical, investigatory, experimental, and survey studies" in the Research and Evaluation category, was not utilized in their positions. She also found that the three management levels differed significantly in their perceived utility of 39 of the 58 competencies, supporting the notion that different competencies are needed in different management levels.

In 1977, Minetti studied competency development within three student affairs graduate preparation programs. While it was not his intent to validate the importance of specific competencies, he nonetheless created a competency list that has been referenced and utilized in subsequent studies, potentially because of the self-proclaimed extensive literature review that was conducted to create it. The 47 competencies on the list received support from student affairs theorists, practitioners, and professional associations and were grouped into six clusters: Counseling, Human Relations, and Interpersonal skills; Theory and Practice of Administration and Management; Research, Testing, and Measurement; Historical, Philosophical, and Social Foundations of Higher Education; Meeting Student Needs; and Professional Purpose and Role Identity.

Ostroth (1979, 1981) researched the criteria used to evaluate the competence of candidates for entry-level positions in student affairs. Using a set of 36 competencies derived from Minetti's (1977) work, he surveyed contact persons from a variety of entry-level position listings. While 30 competencies showed at least a moderate level of importance by a majority of respondents, Ostroth's analysis revealed that:

> A few specific skill areas . . . were particularly important entry-level selection criteria: (a) competency in assessing student needs and interests; (b) competency in mediating conflict between individuals and groups; (c) competencies in group

> advisement and in recognition of group dynamics; and (d) competency in programming. (1981, p. 11)

Four specific competency items were rated *absolutely essential* by a majority of the respondents: "work cooperatively with others," "manifest well-developed interpersonal relations and communication skills," "work effectively with a wide range of individuals," and "display leadership skills." Competencies that were rated low in importance for entry-level practitioners included "psychometric skills, statistical and research expertise, political acumen, and financial/budgeting skills" (Ostroth, 1981, p. 8). Of the 36 competencies studied, only 1, "administer and interpret personality tests and measurements," was considered of *no importance* for entry-level workers by a majority of the respondents.

Hyman (1983, 1988) modified the THE Model to identify five competency clusters: Goal-Setting, Consultation, Communication, Assessment and Evaluation, and Environmental and Organizational Management. The 33 entry-level competencies were drawn from research by Domeier (1977), Hanson (1977), and Minetti (1977), and placed under one of the five clusters. Hyman then surveyed a random sample of upper-level managers, directors of housing, and student affairs graduate preparation program faculty members. These professionals overwhelmingly agreed that all 33 competencies were important for staff in entry-level positions, although the competencies in the Assessment and Evaluation cluster were found to be least important. Hyman (1988) also found that the four competencies within the Consultation cluster—"recognize and use expertise of others," "facilitate group problem-solving and group decision-making," "facilitate staff development through in-service training," and "work effectively with a diversity of

individual students and faculty"—were the "*most* [italics added] likely to be perceived as important for assuming an entry level student affairs position" (p. 148).

The two main purposes of Henry's (1985) study were to determine what entry-level practitioners perceived as their levels of competency expertise and whether they desired development of those competencies. Utilizing 36 competencies from Hanson's (1977) list, Henry asked SSAOs to determine the importance of each to entry-level work. Twenty six items from the SSAO survey were selected for the entry-level practitioner survey because they were rated as *absolutely essential* or *very important* by a majority of the SSAOs. While Henry did not release the results, including rankings or means, of the necessity of competencies for entry-level work as perceived by SSAOs, she did determine that for 17 of the 26 competencies, at least 75% of entry-level respondents indicated a need to develop those competencies, perhaps signifying the importance of those competencies for their positions. As Henry speculated:

> In some instances, [entry-level] respondents indicated a low level of expertise with no desire for further development (discipline, managing physical facilities). Perhaps the lack of interest in further development is due to the fact that the individuals do not anticipate responsibility in those specific areas or they do not consider them to be very important. (p. 90)

Almost 91% of entry-level practitioners stated that they needed additional development in recognizing and understanding legal issues related to higher education and student affairs.

In 1989, in an effort to design a professional development and training curriculum, Foley surveyed practitioners in all levels of management regarding the proficiency level of competencies needed within their positions. Foley's instrument was created from both a literature review and suggestions from ACPA leadership. It consisted

of 64 competency items, most of which were eventually organized into seven clusters: Counseling and Consultation, Management, Academic Support, Research, Societal Issues, Program Development, and Higher Education. Foley was able to extract information based on career stage, which in this case included up to 10 years of experience (compared to the norm of 5) for her definition of *entry-level*. Respondents in this career stage ranked the Counseling and Consultation cluster the highest. The two highest ranked individual competencies were "leadership skills" and "interpersonal relations," both of which fell in the Management cluster. When comparing career stages, Foley noted that "student interaction . . . [clusters], such as counseling and consultation and societal issues, are perceived as the most important . . . [clusters] to adequately meet the demands of the entry level practitioner while management becomes progressively more important" (p. 157) to the upper-level administrator.

ACPA and NASPA joined forces on the Task Force on Professional Preparation and Practice (1990), created to discuss issues related to new professional preparation and competencies needed for the field. The Task Force solicited feedback from "notable" practitioners and preparation program faculty members regarding entry-level competencies. The analysis resulted in eight competencies for new professionals: "organizational, human development, and management theory;" "history and philosophy of higher education;" "understanding of and competence in addressing cultural diversity;" "student development theory and practice;" "research, assessment, and evaluation skills;" "fiscal management and budgeting processes;" "applications of computers and other technology;" and "teaching methodology."

Saidla (1990) surveyed professionals in different management levels at a large state institution, with the intent of being able to identify the general competencies necessary for all entry-level practitioners. Four of the 20 studied competencies were rated *essential* for general entry-level work: "personal communication skills (oral or written)," "understanding of individual differences," "ability to demonstrate caring," and "professional ethics & legal responsibilities." Of these, communication skills was ranked as the top competency by practitioners in all levels of management. Ten competencies were rated *important* by the respondents: "understanding of diverse populations," "commitment to personal & professional growth," "program development & implementation," "group leadership," "individual counseling," "organization & administration of services," "understanding of current problems & issues," "understanding of student development theory," "staff supervision and development," and "translation of student development theory to practice." Saidla concluded that, "for student affairs practitioners, the general people-oriented skills or qualities are the most valued" (p. 8).

As discussed previously, Young and Coldwell (1993) studied the eight competencies identified by the TFPPP (1990) along with two additional ones ("counseling/consultation theory/practice" and "values/ethics/philosophy" of the field). While technically studying the utility of professional development topics for all levels of management, Young and Coldwell extracted entry-level responses and found that all 10 competencies were found to be at least *slightly useful* for entry-level practitioners. Just like their mid- and upper-level counterparts, entry-level professionals rated skills and knowledge in cultural diversity as the most useful competency, and for entry-level

respondents, the only one rated *extremely useful*. The six competencies related to values and ethics, technology, organizational management, student development, counseling and consultation, and fiscal management were rated *somewhat useful*, while those related to research and assessment, teaching methodologies, and the history and philosophy of higher education were found to be only *slightly useful* for entry-level work. In comparing responses based on management level, entry-level participants saw more usefulness in counseling and consultation theory than did mid-level managers and SSAOs and less need for research and assessment skills than did mid-level managers.

In 1999, Robertson surveyed entry-level practitioners and their supervisors to compare their perceptions of competencies needed for entry-level work. Robertson selected Minetti's (1977) instrument as the basis for her research because it "incorporated the COSPA [1975] model, one of the foundations upon which student affairs practice has been built, [had] sound instrumentation development from previous studies, and because it was the most recently constructed instrument identified in the literature of the field" (p. 28). Using an expert panel, she modified and updated the competencies to create a list of 46 competency statements that were classified into six clusters: Human Relations and Interpersonal Skills, Administration and Management, Research and Assessment, Historical and Philosophical Foundations, Meeting Student Needs, and Professional Purpose and Role Identity. Both entry-level employees and their supervisors considered all six competency clusters and 46 competency items to be important for entry-level work. The two clusters that were rated most important were Meeting Student Needs and Human Relations and Interpersonal Skills, under which fell the two most important competency items, "work effectively with a wide range of individuals" and "work

cooperatively with students." The two clusters that were rated the lowest (but still important) were Research and Assessment and Administration and Management.

Waple (2000, 2006) surveyed entry-level practitioners, defined as those who had graduated from a graduate preparation program and entered the field of student affairs within the past five years, to determine what competencies were necessary for entry-level work. The list of 28 competencies used in his study was derived from a literature review. Each competency was placed into one of seven clusters: Foundational Studies; Theoretical Studies; Technological Skills; Organization and Administration of Student Affairs; Helping and Communication Skills; Practical Work; and Assessment, Evaluation and Research. Entry-level respondents indicated that 15 of the skills had a high degree of necessity, while 5 had a moderate degree of necessity. Five individual competencies—"oral and written communication skills," "problem solving," "advising students and student organizations," "crisis and conflict management," and "effective program planning and implementation"—"were deemed necessary to a very high degree" (2006, p. 10). Of these five skills, four belonged to the Helping and Communication Skills cluster. Of the 28 items, only three—"research methods," "history of higher education," and "history of student affairs"—were necessary at a low level. Two of these competencies were from the Foundational Studies cluster. Waple (2000) concluded that entry-level staff members, "regardless of job function, view that skills related to the theoretical studies and organization and administration of student affairs, as well as helping and communication skills, technological skills and assessment skills are most necessary for entry-level work" (p. 76).

In 2005, Burkard, Cole, Ott, and Stoflet used the Delphi method to identify 32 competencies essential for entry-level work. The researchers chose to examine the perceptions of mid- and upper-level administrators, as "no one may be better positioned to help us understand the necessary entry-level competencies . . . than those who recruit, select, hire, and supervise such staff members" (p. 286). Responses were grouped into five clusters: Human Relations Skills, Personal/Professional Qualities, Administrative/Management, Research, and Technology. Of the five areas, Personal/Professional Qualities (e.g., interpersonal relations, communication, and time management) and Human Relations Skills (e.g., collaboration, teamwork, counseling, multicultural competence, and training) emerged as the most important for entry-level work.

Kuk, Cobb, and Forrest (2007) asked mid-level managers, SSAOs, and student affairs graduate preparation program faculty members for their perceptions regarding competencies important to entry-level professionals, in an effort to determine if statistically significant differences in perception existed between these three groups. The researchers developed a list of 50 competencies based on, among others, the 2003 CAS Standards for student affairs graduate preparation programs. After reviewing the responses, the researchers grouped the competencies into four clusters: Individual Practice and Administration, Professional Knowledge and Content, Goal Setting and Ability to Deal with Change, and Managing Organizations and Groups. While the purpose of the study was not to identify which individual competencies were important for entry-level professionals (researchers had these data but did not report them), it did confirm that the three participating groups differed in their perceptions of the importance

of three of the four competency clusters, thus supporting the notion that different groups may have different perceptions of the competencies needed in a specific management level. Specifically, faculty perceived all but Professional Knowledge and Content as less important for entry-level practitioners than did their practitioner colleagues. Kuk et al. were able to conclude that:

> With the increasing complexity of issues facing student affairs professionals and their organizations, being able to function as effective administrators, to manage organizations, and to be effective change agents are competencies that are increasingly perceived as prerequisites for entry-level practitioners. (p. 680)

Although not directly and solely a study targeted at discovering entry-level competencies, ACPA's New Professional Needs Study (Cilente, Henning, Jackson, Kennedy, & Sloane, 2007) was completed in an attempt to identify developmental needs of entry-level practitioners, broadly defining *needs* as skills that entry-level practitioners are required have in order to be successful in the field. In developing the instrument, the research group performed a literature review regarding entry-level needs and eventually created a list of 30 of them. "Increasing knowledge in fostering student learning, enhancing supervision skills, and developing multicultural competencies were some of the top needs new professionals identified throughout this study" (p. 21).

Cuyjet, Longwell-Grice, and Molina (2009) studied entry-level practitioners (defined in this case as those who had completed a student affairs master's degree within the last three years) and their supervisors to determine which competencies were important for entry-level positions. They used the 2006 CAS Standards for student affairs graduate preparation programs as the basis for the 22 competencies that were identified for use on the instrument. Both entry-level respondents and their supervisors rated

knowledge about ethics and standards of practice, working with diverse populations, and how the college experience can enhance student development as the most important competencies needed in entry-level positions. Entry-level practitioners rated knowledge about grant writing techniques, writing for publication, and the history of higher education as the least important competencies, while their supervisors rated knowledge about grant writing techniques, quantitative research methodology, and writing for publication as least important.

Entry-Level Competencies by Functional Area and Institutional Type

As previously discussed, student affairs practitioners have, in limited fashion, studied or provided experienced-based opinions regarding competencies important for specific functional areas and/or institutional types. While most of this literature gives no attention to a specific management level, several previously mentioned pieces do focus on those practitioners in entry-level positions.

Foley (1989) found significant differences in the importance of four of the seven competency clusters (Counseling and Consultation, Management, Academic Support, and Societal Issues) for entry-level practitioners based on institutional type (specifically, community college versus four-year). She also found significant differences in the importance of competencies based on the functional areas of residence life, career services, and counseling. For example, there were significant differences in the importance of the Management, Academic Support, Societal Issues, and Higher Education clusters between those who worked in career services and those who worked in residence life.

Saidla (1990) surveyed professionals in different management levels of eight functional areas (student development, student union, counseling center, special programs, career planning, residence life, financial aid, and registration and records). In addition to identifying general entry-level competencies, her intent was to identify specific competencies needed in each functional area. While the study was conducted at a large state institution and thus limited in its generalizability, Saidla found that communication skills was ranked as the top competency by practitioners in all functional areas. In addition, she found that practitioners in the functional areas differed in the level of importance assigned to many competencies. For example, those who worked in the student union considered five competencies to be essential, while those who worked in the counseling center and residence life considered eight competencies (although not the same ones) to be essential.

Finally, Robertson (1999) included functional area as a variable in her study of entry-level practitioners and their supervisors. When respondent data were split according to functional area (i.e., residence life, student activities, and other), Robertson was able to show some differences. In fact, when looking at entry-level workers in the three areas, significant differences existed in the level of importance of 13 of the 46 competency items. For example, entry-level practitioners in "student activities and residence life rated [the] 'Meeting Student Needs' [cluster] as significantly more important than did those working in other areas of student affairs" (p. 49). Additionally, supervisors in the distinct functional areas were found to have significantly different ratings in the level of importance of 7 of the 46 competency items. For example, supervisors in residence life rated "perform fair and effective discipline of student misconduct" and "supervise and

evaluate paraprofessional staff" as significantly more important than supervisors in other functional areas of student affairs.

Inconsistency Within the Literature on Entry-Level Competencies

The complexity and confusion surrounding the general concepts of *competencies* and *competency models* is further compounded by differences in the literature on entry-level student affairs competencies. For example, differences exist in the definition of *entry-level*, specifically in the criteria that differentiate what people or positions are classified as entry-level. As mentioned previously, there is no profession-wide agreement about the conditions that define this or any management level. The main criterion that distinguishes entry-level from mid-level seems to be the number of years served in the field, which this researcher found to be typically *less than five*. Not all student affairs professionals use this specific numerical cut-off, however.

Related to this is a discrepancy in the literature regarding use of the term *new professional*. This term is oftentimes used interchangeably with *entry-level*. However, they do not necessarily refer to the same level of person within a positional hierarchy (e.g., an upper-level administrator could be considered a "new" professional if he or she recently joined the field, which is not an uncommon situation). The literature is not always clear in distinguishing who is considered to be a new professional. Depending on how a researcher conducted the study, for example, he or she may have inadvertently included those who were not actually serving in entry-level positions.

Who is asked about the importance of or need for entry-level competencies provides further distinction between competency studies. Did the researcher ask entry-

level practitioners, mid-level managers, upper-level administrators, graduate preparation program faculty members, or a combination of these positions? As discussed previously, beliefs may differ based on management level.

Differences have also evolved based on the source of the competencies. For example, sometimes the source of the competencies is experience-based opinion. Other times, the competencies are extracted from one specific study or work or even a number of them (e.g., a literature review). And while this happens less often, the competencies may be created from scratch (e.g., via the Delphi method) or via a combination of these approaches.

The last major difference among existing literature is competency terminology. Based on this researcher's review of the literature, it seems that competency phrasing (i.e., its name or how it is written) varies widely. It is rare that a competency from one study can be compared directly to a competency from another. In addition, what may be considered a single competency in one piece of literature (e.g., "communication") may actually be considered two separate competencies in another (e.g., "verbal communication" *and* "oral communication").

Inconsistency regarding these issues makes it challenging to compare and contrast the literature on student affairs competencies, especially since it is not always possible to determine the author or researcher's intent. The complexity and confusion that results from the lack of consistency within competency literature, and specifically student affairs competency literature, leaves the door open for criticism regarding the utility of these concepts within the field.

New Competencies for Student Affairs

As time progresses, researchers and practitioners focus on "new" competencies that have moved to the forefront due to the changing student body and changing nature of higher education. For example, a few decades ago, the necessity for possessing "specific skills in programming for minority students including married students" (Newton & Richardson, 1976, p. 427) ranked lower in importance than they do now. Over time, the student body has diversified, and professionals now work with more than the "traditional" college student. According to McEwen and Roper (1994a), "it is the collective responsibility of student affairs professionals to respond more effectively and knowledgeably to diverse student groups on college campuses" (p. 49). All practitioners, regardless of management level, functional area, or institutional type, must "be concerned with new applications of theory, changes in institutional relationships to students, improved evaluative techniques, and societal recognition of changed lifestyles in order to meet the needs of the various student groups" (Wade, 1993, p. 31). During a study of students in student affairs graduate preparation programs, McEwen and Roper (1994b) found that a significant percentage of the respondents "reported no or limited experience with persons of color . . . . [and that] two-thirds of the participants reported feeling in need of more [interracial] knowledge" (p. 85). Student affairs practitioners have been encouraged to develop what Pope, Reynolds, and Mueller (2004) have termed *multicultural competence*, the "awareness, knowledge, and skills that are needed to work effectively across cultural groups and to work with complex diversity issues" (p. xiv). Multicultural competence rounds out their proposal of student affairs competencies—along with Administrative, Management, and Leadership Skills; Theory and Translation

Skills; Helping and Interpersonal Skills; Ethical and Legal Knowledge and Decision-Making Skills; Training and Teaching Skills; and Assessment and Evaluation Skills (Pope & Reynolds, 1997).

Technology is constantly evolving as a means of communication and teaching within higher education. According to Kruger (2000), by the "early part of the twenty-first century, information technology skills . . . [became] a core competency for every student affairs professional" (p. 548). Research by Kennedy (2003) specifically confirmed the need of student affairs professionals to possess a variety of computer skills. As a result of today's students entering college with a variety of technological skills, student affairs administrators need to constantly improve and upgrade their own skills and services in order to keep up with student needs and abilities (Dalton, 2003).

Political skills are another competency of suggested importance within student affairs. In a time of decreasing resources and increasing accountability, the ability to "work quickly to see potential points of collaboration . . . [requires] that successful student affairs administrators understand the political aspects of the campus environment and how to work effectively within that environment" (Lovell & Kosten, 2000, p. 567).

Student affairs practitioners have always been expected to possess a variety of competencies. That being said, the importance of certain competencies changes over time, thus reinforcing the need to study them from time to time. According to Lovell and Kosten (2000), "it is important to understand the emphasis on . . . [a] particular skill within its historical context" (p. 563). For example, while not regarded as an entry-level competency, "retention of students" was identified as a competency for upper-level

administrators in the 1980s, when college enrollment of traditional-aged students dropped (Lovell & Kosten).

As mentioned previously, higher education (including student affairs) faces increased accountability due to decreasing budgets and resources. Therefore, while listed as entry-level competencies since at least the 1970s, skills in budget management, assessment, and evaluation will need to become even more refined. With changing campus environments, "more and different skills, knowledge bases, and personal traits will most likely be required" (Lovell & Kosten, 2000, p. 569) of current and future student affairs professionals. What competencies will be emphasized and deemphasized will depend on the evolution of student characteristics and higher education issues in the future.

Summary

Researchers, practitioners, and professional associations have provided both opinion and research-based suggestions regarding the various competencies needed for work in the field of student affairs, and specifically in entry-level positions. Some of the literature is broad, encompassing all management levels, functional areas, and/or institutional types. Some literature is more specific, although this literature seems to be less frequent. While there is no consensus on essential competencies, many have advocated for a wide variety of competencies, the most important of which seem to be general people skills. The collective literature of the past has provided some valuable information on entry-level competencies, much of which is still applicable today. However, characteristics of students and institutions of higher education change over

time, thus requiring a reexamination of the competencies that will assist them in fulfilling their mission of providing student services and developing students in extracurricular settings. The release of the 2007 ACPA SCPC *Professional Competencies* report provides an opportunity to utilize a comprehensive and current model to extract competencies important for entry-level work.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to determine (a) the degree to which the competencies listed in the 2007 Steering Committee on Professional Competencies (SCPC) report were important for work in entry-level student affairs positions, according to entry-level practitioners; (b) the difference, if any, in the degree to which the competencies were important for work in entry-level positions, according to entry-level practitioners who worked in different functional areas of the field (e.g., student activities, judicial affairs, and residence life); and (c) the difference, if any, in the degree to which the competencies were important for work in entry-level positions, according to entry-level practitioners who worked in different institutional types. This chapter provides an overview of the methodology utilized in the study, including sample selection, instrument creation, data collection, and analysis.

Population and Sample

Population

The population for this study consisted of practitioners currently serving in entry-level student affairs positions. The researcher defined *entry-level* positions to be those: (a) for practitioners who had less than five years of full-time experience in student affairs, and (b) that did not include supervision of other professional staff (Fey, 1991). The researcher set no restrictions related to education of participants (i.e., did not limit the study to those entry-level staff with a degree from a student affairs or related graduate preparation program).

Sample

The American College Personnel Association (ACPA; www.myacpa.org) assisted the researcher by providing the e-mail addresses for all members classified as *entry-level*. At the time of this study, ACPA had over 7,800 members, approximately 1,200 of whom were listed as serving in entry-level positions. From this list, the researcher drew two random samples of 970 total members (see Data Collection Plan for further information regarding the first and second round of data collection).

Upon applying for membership, new ACPA members indicate their primary functional area, number of years in the field, and position level (e.g., entry-level or faculty member). ACPA elicits additional member information online, including institutional type, institutional size, and highest degree earned. Since ACPA relies on its members to update their own information, such as when students of graduate preparation programs accept their first full-time positions, records can easily become outdated. Therefore, extracting those members who had previously classified their position level as *entry-level* or *graduate* (i.e., graduate student) or who had previously indicated *0-5* years in the field would have created a list of professionals who were the *most* likely to be currently serving in entry-level positions. Unfortunately, however, ACPA gave the researcher access to only those members who were currently classified as *entry-level*.

In addition to utilizing position level (i.e., entry-level) as a means to draw the sample, the researcher had hoped to stratify the sample utilizing previously self-selected institutional type and/or functional area as separating characteristics. By stratifying the sample in this way, the researcher would have been able to increase the chances that members who worked at different institutional types and/or in different functional areas

were represented (proportional to the population) in the sample, in the hopes of allowing the researcher to analyze data so that Research Questions 2 and 3 could be answered as precisely as possible. Unfortunately, ACPA was unable to stratify the sample in this manner, leaving the researcher to draw a simple random sample.

The sample, generated by random selection, should have created a list of participants that encompassed different institutional types and sizes, regions of the country, educational backgrounds, and functional areas. In this way, any significant results could be more easily applied to the general population of entry-level professionals in student affairs (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009; Gravetter & Wallnau, 2007).

Sample Limitations

There were a number of limitations related to sample selection. First, it should be noted that not all student affairs practitioners are members of ACPA. This therefore prevented the potential inclusion of some population members in the sample. Second, as indicated previously, the list of membership information is only as updated as the members keep it, despite ACPA's bi-annual efforts to get members to update their records. It is possible that a sample member may have changed institutions (and potentially, institutional type, position level, and/or functional area) without updating his or her status with the association. This issue did lead to the inability to reach many sample members (i.e., returned e-mails). Related to this was the inclusion of only those members who were currently classified as *entry-level*. By not including, in the sample, those classified as graduate students or serving in the field for less than five years, the researcher potentially excluded members who were actually serving in entry-level

positions—again a result of outdated records. Like the first limitation, this prevented the potential inclusion of some population members in the sample.

Design of the Study

The researcher desired to provide for an objective study, one that focused on the determination of the existence of differences between the variables and the quantitative data related to the importance of the competencies, without regard for the interpretation of the feelings or behavior of participants concerning their importance. Furthermore, the researcher's goal was to generalize sample responses to the population of entry-level student affairs practitioners. As such, the researcher employed a quantitative approach in this study (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009), recognizing the potential benefits of a qualitative approach for follow-up studies. Utilizing the survey method, the researcher asked entry-level student affairs workers what competencies they believed to be important for their current positions.

Survey Methodology

Surveys

Surveys, according to Dillman, Smyth, and Christian (2009), "have remained a remarkably useful and efficient tool for learning about people's opinions and behaviors" (p. 1). If conducted properly, they allow the researcher to study a small proportion of people in the population to generalize to the full population (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009; Gravetter & Wallnau, 2007).

Surveys have been conducted for more than 75 years through a number of methods (e.g., telephone interview, face-to-face interview, mailed questionnaire, online questionnaire; Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2009). During this time, both increased research on survey methodology and changes in society (e.g., increase in computer availability and use, increase in mobile phone use, and the invention of caller ID) have changed the way researchers conduct surveys (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian). As a result of a variety of these changes, the use of online questionnaires has grown significantly.

As with all research methodologies, survey research has its benefits and challenges. The challenges include ensuring a high enough response rate from the sample to enable the ability to make meaningful analyses and to generalize to the population, ensuring that the questions are clear, and getting participants to respond thoughtfully (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009; Schuh, 2009). On the other hand, this methodology can provide many benefits that others may not. For one, "it has the potential to provide . . . [researchers] with a lot of information obtained from quite a large sample of individuals" (Fraenkel & Wallen, p. 12). In addition, it has the ability to maintain confidentiality and anonymity, thus increasing the chances that participants will answer more honestly and sincerely (Schuh).

For any research study to have validity, it must have internal validity (i.e., differences in the dependent variable are directly related to the independent variable and not others) and external validity (i.e., findings are generalizable to other settings and/or people; Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009; Shavelson, 1996). There are several threats to the internal validity of a study, although the main threats in survey research are mortality or loss of subject, location, and instrumentation, including instrument defects and decay

(Fraenkel & Wallen). The researcher will address these threats for the current study in Study Methodology.

In order to establish external validity and enable the researcher to generalize to the population, sampling error must be minimized (Schuh, 2009). In addition to sampling error, however, Dillman, Smyth, and Christian (2009) suggest the reduction of three other types of error: coverage, non-response, and measurement. For a survey to be successful, "all four sources of survey error have to be reduced to acceptable levels" (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, p. 64). The Tailored Design Method (Dillman, 2000) of conducting surveys addresses these four types of error and was utilized in the current study, as discussed in Data Collection Plan.

Questionnaires

The questionnaire is one method by which data can be collected for a survey. While there are a number of methods by which questionnaires can be distributed, the researcher will focus on traditional mail and online questionnaires. Traditional mail questionnaires have been used to gather opinions and information for decades, becoming commonplace in the 1970s with the development of and increased access to copy machines and electronic typewriters. The utilization of the internet for such purposes has increased significantly since the late 1990s, with the development of and increase in access to computers and the internet (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2009).

As a result of the time differential between development and use of traditional mail and the online questionnaire, significantly more research regarding such factors as visual design, layout, length, sampling, and word choice on responses and response rates

has been conducted with traditional mail questionnaires. However, existing research confirms that, assuming similar visual layouts are used for both methods, results of traditional mail and online surveys can be comparable (Andrews, Nonnecke, & Preece, 2003; Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2009).

Advantages and Disadvantages

Compared to other methods of data collection, the questionnaire provides a number of advantages. These include the ability to distribute it to a large number of people simultaneously, cost effectiveness, efficiency in data collection, relative ease of tabulating results, the ability to maintain anonymity, and the ability to conduct the survey with one researcher (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009; Upcraft & Schuh, 1996). Online questionnaires can provide additional benefits, including greater cost effectiveness, the ability to provide instant error checking and feedback to participants, decreased time (in distribution, response, and data entry), and decreased chances of error in data entry (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2009; Schuh, 2009; Solomon, 2001; Yun & Trumbo, 2000).

On the other hand, questionnaires are not perfect, as they include a number of disadvantages. As compared to interviews, questionnaires do not allow for the participant or researcher to provide clarity or ask questions regarding the questionnaire. Other downfalls include the lack of ability to build rapport with potential respondents (thus encouraging participation) and survey fatigue, the over surveying of society (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009; Schuh, 2009; Upcraft & Schuh, 1996). Online questionnaires provide additional "technical and administrative challenges that do not exist with traditional

postal . . . surveys" (Andrews, Nonnecke, & Preece, 2003, p. 194). Perhaps the most significant of these challenges is the disparity in computer and internet access among some portions of the general population, which could lead to decreased sample representativeness and generalizability (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2009; Solomon, 2001). All of these factors could result in lower response rates for a study.

While there are a number of disadvantages to using questionnaires, the advantages can outweigh them in a number of circumstances. Nardi (2006) believes that:

> Self-administered questionnaires are best designed for (a) measuring variables with numerous values or response categories that are too much to read to respondents in an interview or on the telephone, (b) investigating attitudes and opinions that are not usually observable, (c) describing characteristics of a large population, and (d) studying behaviors that may be more stigmatizing or difficult for people to tell someone else face-to-face. (p. 67)

Online Questionnaires

Online questionnaires are more common today as a result of the increased capabilities of both computers and the people who use them (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2009). While some of the knowledge regarding effective "design and use of paper-based surveys does translate into electronic formats" (Andrews, Nonnecke, & Preece, 2003, p. 186), implementation procedures need to be handled a bit differently than traditional mail questionnaires. As such, there are five important aspects that are considered critical for successful online surveys: sampling, survey design, distribution methods and response rates, privacy and confidentiality, and piloting (Andrews, Nonnecke, & Preece).

In terms of design, researchers utilizing online questionnaires need to be cognizant of such factors as participants' use of different internet browsers, platforms,

and monitors, which could change how a participant views and responds to the questionnaire (Yun & Trumbo, 2000). According to Dillman, Smyth, and Christian (2009), "these surveys are subject to the inability to ensure that each respondent receives the same visual stimulus from the questionnaire because of the myriad combinations of hardware and software configurations currently in use" (p. 9), which can result in different responses.

Participant privacy and confidentiality is another important component of a successful internet survey, the lack of which can contribute to a lower response rate (Couper, 2000). The researcher must be transparent in communications with the participants, providing disclosure regarding how responses will be handled and used, who will have access to their responses, and if the responses are anonymous.

The next element of a successful online questionnaire is ensuring a legitimate method of sample selection. According to Couper (2000) and Solomon (2001), coverage error or bias and random sampling are the most significant threats to a valid study of the general population. Representativeness and subsequent generalizability become an issue because there is "no systematic list of Internet users from which to draw a sample" (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2009, p. 9). In addition, it has been noted that the characteristics of those who respond to online questionnaires are different from those of the general population in, for example, amount of internet use and skill, age, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status (Andrews, Nonnecke, & Preece, 2003; Solomon). That being said, "there are specific populations where Internet access is extremely high and coverage bias is likely to be less of a concern" (Solomon, 2001, Concerns with Web-based Surveying section, ¶ 2). These populations include college students, university faculty,

and members of professional associations (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian; Solomon). These specific populations generally have high access and internet skill levels, making the "Internet . . . a useful mode for conducting surveys" (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, p. 44).

Response rates play an important role in any survey, and they are especially significant for internet questionnaires. Researchers studying response rate differences between hard copy and online questionnaires have obtained mixed results, with some reporting higher response rates for online questionnaires, some reporting lower response rates, and some reporting no difference (Schuh, 2009). According to Dillman, Smyth, and Christian (2009), "highly salient surveys that are well done and sent to specialized populations can obtain excellent response rates" (p. 443). Nevertheless, researchers can increase response rates by offering incentives, paying attention to visual design and layout, providing multiple contacts with the potential respondents, and personalizing contacts (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian). In this study, the researcher offered incentives (as described in Incentives for Participation) and utilized the functions of Zoomerang (as described in Survey Software) to alter the design and layout and to provide multiple contacts.

Performing a pilot study is especially important for online questionnaires as a result of their unique characteristics. A carefully constructed pilot survey can not only reveal design problems based on browser or platform differences, confusing questions or instructions, and technical difficulties within the questionnaire, but it can also expose undeliverable mail within the sample list (Andrews, Nonnecke, & Preece, 2003; Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2009).

While not all researchers support the use of online questionnaires, many believe that they are appropriate to use when resources are limited, when time is a factor, and when the population under study has computer and internet access and skills (Andrews, Nonnecke, & Preece, 2003; Schuh, 2009; Yun & Trumbo, 2000). As internet surveys become more and more common, increased research on design and implementation will be needed to ensure their validity.

Study Methodology

Methodology Selection

The researcher chose a survey design, utilizing an online questionnaire created for this study, administered as described in Data Collection Plan. The online questionnaire was chosen as the mode of distribution and response as a result of a number of factors. First, it could provide a number of benefits to the current study, including efficiency in cost and time (e.g., distribution, response, and data entry) and a decrease in researcher data entry errors. Second, the population under study was very likely to have internet access (minimally, at work) and skills, two of the qualifiers for which internet questionnaires may be used more dependably (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2009; Schuh, 2009; Solomon, 2001).

Competency List

The researcher surveyed professionals in entry-level positions to determine the importance of competencies for their work. As indicated previously, the researcher utilized competencies listed in the ACPA SCPC report, *Professional Competencies*,

released in 2007 (available to ACPA members at www.myacpa.org; see Appendix B for the Executive Summary).

As discussed in chapter 2, there are 203 competencies, grouped into eight clusters, listed in the report. Within each cluster, the competencies are further categorized by degree of skill. All but one cluster (Leadership and Administration/Management) is separated into three skill levels (i.e., basic, intermediate, and advanced). The Leadership and Administration/Management cluster is broken into four subcompetency areas: Resource Management, Human Resources, Organizational Development, and Social Responsibility/Civic Engagement. Of these, only Social Responsibility/Civic Engagement is separated into the aforementioned skill levels. The other three "provide a sample of a basic skill ('From'), an intermediate skill ('Through'), and an advanced skill ('To')" (SCPC, 2007, p. 10), indicating examples of progression of attainment.

There were too many competencies for participants to read and rate all of them within a reasonable amount of time (see Table 1). As a result, the researcher studied only those competencies in the *basic* skill level (which, for this study, included those labeled *from* in the Leadership and Administration/Management subcompetency areas). While the SCPC was purposeful in not categorizing skill levels by management level (i.e., not calling them *entry-level*, *mid-level*, and *upper-level*; P. Love, personal communication, May 12, 2008; R. Sanlo, personal communication, May 8, 2008), the researcher chose the basic skill level as the most logical grouping of competencies to study for entry-level positions, while still allowing for all eight competency clusters to be included. Focusing solely on the basic level allowed participants the opportunity to review and rate a more manageable list of competencies.

Table 1 Quantity of SCPC Competencies by Skill Level

Competency cluster	Basic/ from	Intermediate/ through	Advanced/ to	Total
Advising and helping	9	6	3	18
Assessment, evaluation, and research	8	14	15	37
Ethics	6	3	3	12
Leadership and administration/management	21	21	17	59
Legal foundations	6	4	5	15
Pluralism and inclusion	7	16	10	33
Student learning and development	4	5	3	12
Teaching	5	7	5	17
Total	66	76	61	203

Adding to the complexity of quantity was the way in which some of the competencies are presented within the report, making it difficult to translate them into instrument questions. For example, "Assess trustworthiness and other aspects of quality in qualitative studies and assess the transferability of these findings to current work settings" (one basic competency in the Assessment, Evaluation, and Research cluster) is not only lengthy, but it also includes several concepts, including the abilities to assess the trustworthiness of quality *and* to assess transferability to current work settings. As a result, the researcher simplified the competencies by re-wording them (due to complex or abstract wording) and/or splitting them into additional competencies (due to the presence of several concepts within one competency), when deemed necessary. For example, the aforementioned competency, "Assess trustworthiness and other aspects of quality in qualitative studies and assess the transferability of these findings to current work settings" became "Ability to assess the quality of a study that uses qualitative methods" and "Ability to assess whether or how the findings of a qualitative study transfer to my

current work setting." This process resulted in 91 researcher re-written competencies (see Table 2). By re-wording and/or splitting certain competencies, the researcher hoped to make questionnaire items easier to read and comprehend and to reduce variation in interpretation by respondents, while maintaining the intent of the original SCPC competencies.

Table 2 Quantity of Basic Competencies Throughout the Re-writing Process

Competency cluster	SCPC original	Researcher re-written	Expert panel feedback
Advising and helping	9	13	11
Assessment, evaluation, and research	8	10	9
Ethics	6	6	6
Leadership and administration/management	21	33	27
Legal foundations	6	7	7
Pluralism and inclusion	7	9	5
Student learning and development	4	5	5
Teaching	5	8	5
Total	66	91	75

An expert panel was utilized to review the re-written competencies to determine "the degree to which the items measure the criteria or objectives [i.e., whether the researcher captured the intent of the original competencies], ... often described as *face validity*" (Schuh, 2009, p. 123). The three panel members were selected due to their professional experience, which varied by contribution to and expertise in the topic (i.e., professional development or competency research) and/or research and assessment methods (see Appendix E for the list of panel members and their qualifications). The panel members were asked to provide feedback not only on word selection within each

competency, but also on the potential elimination or unification of similar or duplicate competencies or concepts.

Most of the re-written competencies were accepted by the panel without question or comment. Panel members did provide feedback on many of them, however. As opposed to creating consensus among the panel members to determine the final instrument competencies, the researcher received independent feedback from each panel member. Some of their feedback was simple (e.g., change *utilize* to *use*) and was typically implemented, regardless of how many panel members made the specific suggestion. Whenever at least two panel members provided the same or similar feedback on a competency item, that feedback was integrated.

Incorporating individual feedback was at times challenging, especially when panel members provided conflicting advice. In those instances, the researcher reviewed the comments to determine which to incorporate. These decisions were based on, for instance, the researcher's interpretation of the original SCPC competency, the panel members' expertise type or level, or the researcher's opinion regarding the ability for entry-level participants to understand the potentially revised competency. Regardless, the researcher's ultimate goal was to maintain the SCPC's intent while creating a more concise instrument with understandable competencies. Consequently, decisions to incorporate feedback were based on that goal. Utilizing feedback from the expert panel, the researcher formulated a list of 75 simplified competencies to be included in the instrument (see Table 2).

Threats to Validity

According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2009), in survey research, the main threats to internal validity are mortality, location, and instrumentation. These threats were believed to be minimal for this study. First, the mortality (i.e., loss of subject) threat was negligible since this study did not involve more than one opportunity for providing responses, such as with a pre- and post-survey method or longitudinal study. Second, the location of data collection, whether it be at a participant's home, work, or any other place the person completed the questionnaire, was out of the researcher's control, but was not believed to have had a significant effect on the results.

Third, the instrument itself, including instrument defects and decay, could have posed a threat to internal validity. To decrease the threat of the former, the researcher utilized the validation procedures described above and in Instrumentation. These procedures included the utilization of an expert panel and pilot studies. The latter threat was negligible as a result of the use of online data collection and lack of use of open-ended questions whose purpose was to elicit more complex responses.

Research Questions

Within this study, the following research questions were addressed utilizing the basic competencies listed in *Professional Competencies*:

1. To what degree are the competencies important for work in entry-level positions, according to entry-level practitioners?

2. What difference, if any, exists in the degree to which the competencies are important for work in entry-level positions, according to entry-level practitioners who work in different functional areas?
3. What difference, if any, exists in the degree to which the competencies are important for work in entry-level positions, according to entry-level practitioners who work in different institutional types?

Instrumentation

Questionnaire Goals

The first goal of the questionnaire (see Appendix F) was to separate the sample into two groups: those who met the definition of serving in entry-level positions and those who did not. In addition to the criteria within the researcher's definition of entry-level, sample members must have also been *currently* serving in a full-time position in the field. Those not serving in full-time student affairs positions at the time of the study were deemed unable to accurately respond to competencies needed for entry-level student affairs work in their current position (necessitated by the Likert scale utilized by the researcher, as discussed in Instrument Questions). Sample members who did not meet all of these criteria (i.e., currently serving in a full-time student affairs position, having less than five years of full-time experience, and not supervising professional staff), as determined by their responses on the initial set of items in the questionnaire, did not complete the rest of the questionnaire (i.e., did not provide feedback on the importance of the selected competencies).

The second goal of the questionnaire, the impetus behind the study, was to solicit feedback on the importance of the 75 re-written basic competencies listed in the 2007 *Professional Competencies* report. Participants rated each competency on a Likert scale, indicating the degree of importance of each for work in entry-level positions in student affairs.

The third goal of the questionnaire was to solicit information regarding basic demographics of the entry-level participants. This information enabled the researcher to determine if there were any differences in competency importance based on selected demographics, as discussed in chapter 4.

Instrument Questions

The researcher utilized three types of questions in order to meet the questionnaire goals. The first set of questions (i.e., screening) was utilized to determine if a sample member met the criteria of currently serving in an entry-level student affairs position. These questions provided the participant with several options from which to select the single most appropriate response. A sample member who did not meet the criterion of a specific item was immediately removed, even if other screening questions remained. As a final determination regarding entry-level status, assuming that a sample member met all criteria (i.e., was not yet screened out), the member was asked if he or she considered him or herself to be working in an entry-level position.

The second set of questions elicited opinions regarding the importance of the selected competencies, as discussed in Study Methodology. These questions asked entry-level participants to rate competencies on a Likert scale, where 1 was *not important or*

applicable to me in my current position, 2 was *somewhat important to me in my current position*, 3 was *important to me in my current position*, 4 was *very important to me in my current position*, and 5 was *extremely important to me in my current position*. This scale was adapted from the one created and utilized by the United States Office of Personnel Management, for which 1 is *not important*, 2 is *somewhat important*, 3 is *important*, 4 is *very important*, and 5 is *extremely important.* This scale was selected as the foundation for the researcher's scale because the Office of Personnel Management has, through its Multipurpose Occupational Systems Analysis Inventory Close-ended (MOSAIC) studies, identified competencies for hundreds of Federal occupations (United States Office of Personnel Management, 2007). This scale is also utilized by the United States Department of Labor/Employment and Training Administration via the Occupational Information Network (O*NET), "the nation's primary source of occupational information" (O*NET Resource Center, n.d., About O*Net section, ¶ 1).

The third set of questions elicited demographic information of participants. Requested information included the participant's institutional type (e.g., four-year public or two-year public) and primary functional area of work (e.g., residence life/housing, student activities, or judicial affairs), along with institutional size, possession or lack thereof of a degree from a student affairs graduate preparation program, gender, and age. These questions provided the participant with a variety of options from which to select the most appropriate response.

It should be noted that, while not counted as one of the three types of questions included in the instrument, one additional type of question was utilized. One optional, open-ended response question followed each competency cluster as well as served as the

final survey item. As the goal was to conduct a quantitative study, the researcher's intent for inclusion of these items was not to analyze the responses related to the importance of specific items, but rather to provide participants with the ability to provide feedback in the event that, for example, they found a competency item confusing or wanted to clarify a response. The researcher received only a few of these types of comments, none of which indicated a pattern of misunderstanding or lack of clarity. This feedback, if provided consistently for specific items, could have been helpful during data analysis in chapter 4 and conclusion drawing in chapter 5.

Most of the items in the questionnaire were not considered sensitive in nature. For example, the researcher asked for the participant's opinion on the degree of *importance* of a competency, as opposed to the degree of *possession* of a competency, the latter of which was potentially more sensitive. Of all items in the questionnaire, only four (gender, age, highest degree, and whether a degree was in student affairs) were potentially sensitive and, as a result, respondents were provided with the opportunity to select *prefer not to respond*, thus allowing them to opt out of a response. Only the screening items required a response, which was necessary in order to prevent participation of those sample members who did not meet the researcher's qualifications.

Questionnaire Length

The full questionnaire contained 5 screening items, 75 re-written competency items, 8 demographic items, and 9 open-ended response items. If a sample member met all criteria for serving in an entry-level position, he or she should have minimally responded to a total of 88 items. The questionnaire should have taken no longer than 20

minutes for a participant to complete in full, based on pilot test timing (as discussed in Pilot Studies).

Survey Software

Utilizing existing survey software "can cut down on the time it takes to develop an instrument and collect and analyze data" (Schuh, 2009, p. 244). As such, the researcher selected the Premium edition of Zoomerang (found at www.zoomerang.com) for this study due to the features that the software provided, including the ability to create branching and skip patterns, to make respondent contact via e-mail, to track who had not responded and send reminders, to select visual design and layout options (e.g., background color, font type, text size, number of questions per page), to include graphics (e.g., logos), to allow respondents to return to the questionnaire at a later time, and to check spelling. In addition, Zoomerang provided the opportunity for the researcher to utilize a web greeting (see Appendix G), a web page that participants saw prior to opening the online questionnaire, along with end pages, including a page that appeared if a participant was screened out (see Appendix H) and a thank you page that appeared when a participant completed the questionnaire (see Appendix I).

Readability Scores

Readability scores of the instrument were calculated by Microsoft Word. The Flesch Reading Ease score for the instrument was 42.9 out of 100 (a higher score indicates greater ease in understanding it). The Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level score, however, was a 9.6, meaning that a freshman to sophomore in high school would be able

to understand the instrument. This grade level was much lower than the education level of the sample.

Pilot Studies

A number of steps were taken to ensure reliable and valid instrumentation. After the competencies were re-written (as discussed in Study Methodology) and prior to their review by the expert panel to verify the re-wording, the researcher reviewed each competency, by talking through the meaning of each one, with an entry-level co-worker. This served as a precursory review to ensure understanding of the re-written competencies.

Convenience Pilot

Using the expert panel-reviewed competencies, the researcher administered the instrument to a convenience sample of 10 entry-level practitioners at the University of Central Florida (UCF). All members were given a $10 gift card in return for their time and effort. Seven of the sample members were asked to respond to the online instrument as if they were participating in a "real" survey. They were asked to track their response time, allowing the researcher to determine an average questionnaire completion time of 16.5 minutes. Three of the sample members were asked to provide a more thorough review of the instrument, thereby disregarding response time. While they were asked to respond truthfully to the questions, this group was also asked to write feedback on a hard copy of the instrument while completing the survey.

All participants were asked to provide feedback on technical difficulties encountered; instructions, questions, or words that were difficult to understand; and

length of the instrument. Utilizing their feedback, the researcher made several wording and formatting changes to the instrument, including changing the name of one of the functional areas (i.e., Intramural/Recreational Sports to Recreational Sports/Services) within the appropriate demographic item and fixing font sizes within several items. The researcher also removed a screening item, the concept of which was, prior to the pilot study, one of the criteria in the definition of an entry-level position. This question, regarding the amount of experience needed to be qualified to apply for the position, caused several incorrect screen-outs and almost 50% of the participants to select *Unsure*. In addition to wording and formatting, the researcher was able to test the functionality of Zoomerang, including the sending of follow-up e-mails to non-responders (as described in Data Collection Plan).

Next, in an effort to verify internal consistency within the questionnaire, the researcher determined Cronbach's alpha (α), the statistic "used in calculating the reliability of items that are not scored right versus wrong" (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009, p. 158). Cronbach's alpha ranges from 0 to 1; the closer it is to 1, the more internally reliable it is (Nardi, 2006). Since the pilot study only included 10 participants, any statistics based on these responses should be scrutinized. That being taken into consideration, Cronbach's alpha was calculated for each construct (i.e., SCPC competency cluster) and ranged from .77 to .93.

Population Pilot

During the convenience pilot, pilot members provided valuable feedback regarding clarity and formatting. As a result of this and the desire to receive feedback

from the larger population, the researcher also completed a pilot study using 100 randomly drawn e-mails from the list of ACPA entry-level members.

Because the goal of this pilot was only to solicit wording and formatting feedback, as opposed to timing it, the researcher decided to split the instrument into two shorter instruments in an effort to reduce the time it would take to complete it (and thus encourage a greater response rate). Both population pilot instruments included the screening and demographic items. In one instrument, the researcher combined the Advising and Helping and the Leadership and Management/Administration clusters (for a total of 38 individual competencies), while for the other, the researcher combined the remaining six clusters (for a total of 37 individual competencies).

Both population pilot instruments were sent through Zoomerang to 50 entry-level ACPA members, who were given one week to complete their assigned instrument. Non-responders received a reminder notice three days following the initial e-mail. Three of the 100 e-mails were returned undeliverable. Accounting for 49 and 48 questionnaires believed to have been delivered, respectively, there was a response rate of 24.5% (including seven screen-outs and five completes) for the instrument that combined the Advising and Helping and the Leadership and Management/Administration clusters and a response rate of 25.0% (including six screen-outs and six completes) for the other.

Pilot members were asked to provide feedback on technical difficulties and item wording (i.e., if items were clearly worded and understandable). The researcher incorporated only one wording suggestion (i.e., changing *count* to *include* in the screening item about years of full-time experience) into the final instrument. In

conclusion, having the instrument analyzed by an expert panel and two sets of pilot study participants helped ensure that validity was acceptable.

Data Collection Plan

Tailored Design Method

In an effort to encourage a significant response rate and decrease overall survey error (i.e., coverage, sampling, non-response, and measurement), the researcher utilized the Tailored Design Method (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2009). The Tailored Design Method is a scientific approach for conducting surveys that utilizes "multiple motivational features in compatible and mutually supportive ways to encourage high quantity and quality of response" (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, p. 16). Using this approach, a researcher can tailor implementation methods (e.g., number of contacts, timing between contacts, and utilization of an incentive) and characteristics of the questionnaire (e.g., visual design, question type, or length) in order to achieve this goal.

Contacts

For traditional mail surveys, Dillman, Smyth, and Christian (2009) suggest the utilization of a five-contact method, including a *pre-notice letter*, *questionnaire mailing*, *thank you postcard*, *replacement questionnaire mailing*, and *final contact*. To save time and money, the researcher utilized a modification of the traditional mail survey process, employing five contacts via electronic means (i.e., e-mail). While Dillman's contact process, crafted in the late 1970s and updated to fit the current trends of the day, provides detailed guidelines for conducting traditional mail surveys, little research on the optimal

combination and timing of contacts for web surveys has been completed (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian). The concept of utilizing multiple contacts for web surveys is still valid (Cook, Heath, & Thompson, 2000; Dillman, Smyth, & Christian), however, as is the acceptance of utilizing a quicker tempo between contacts (Anderson & Gansneder, 1995; Dillman, Smyth, & Christian).

First Round

The first contact was a *pre-notice e-mail* (see Appendix J), which was sent to sample members through the researcher's personal e-mail account. It included an explanation of the study, including its necessity, a request to participate, consent information required by the UCF Institutional Review Board (IRB), and a message regarding the support of ACPA's Standing Committee on Graduate Students and New Professionals and the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators' (NASPA) New Professionals and Graduate Students Knowledge Committee (discussed in Associational Support). The second contact was the *competency questionnaire e-mail* (see Appendix K). This message was sent three days after the pre-notice e-mail and discussed the study and the benefits of participation. It also included the hyperlink to the questionnaire and a response deadline of three weeks. Six days after the competency questionnaire mailing, non-responders received a *competency questionnaire reminder e-mail* (see Appendix L). This contact reinforced the importance of the study and their response. Eight days later, the researcher sent the *competency questionnaire reminder 2 e-mail* (see Appendix M). Five days later (two days prior to the deadline), the researcher sent the *final contact e-mail* (see Appendix N) to remaining non-responders. This contact

provided one final request for participation. The last four contacts, all of which included the questionnaire hyperlink, were sent through Zoomerang's e-mail system so as to enable the researcher to track non-responders.

Although the number of contacts that sample members received varied, the quantity ranged from two to five, depending on whether a person responded to a questionnaire upon request. From the first contact until the response deadline, the data collection process took 24 days (see Figure 2).

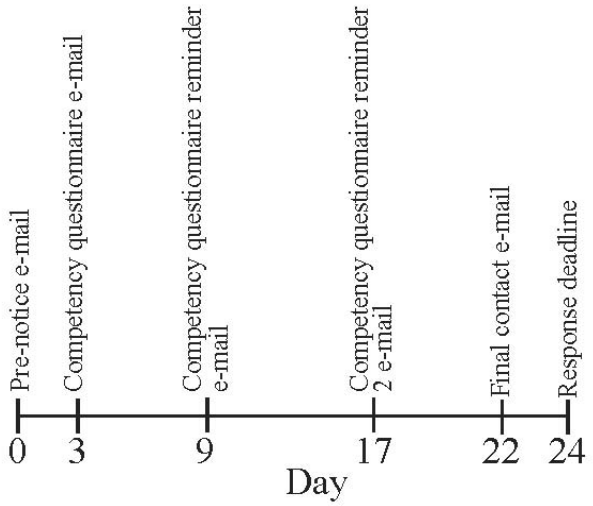


Figure 2: First Round Data Collection Timeline

Second Round

Several days prior to the response deadline, the researcher reviewed the quantity of responses received and, in the hopes of increasing the response rate (or at the very least, quantity), decided to contact an extra sample of members from the ACPA list (i.e., send a second round of the questionnaire to a new set of members). The same five contacts were sent to these sample members, although on a different schedule due to

timing with the Thanksgiving holiday. In this case, instead of a 3, 6, 8, 5 day (indicating the number of days from when the previous contact was sent) schedule, a 1, 6, 5, 8 day schedule was used (see Figure 3). Both rounds provided the same number of days to which the sample members had access to the questionnaire (i.e., gave them 21 days to respond, after the first hyperlink was sent in the competency questionnaire e-mail).

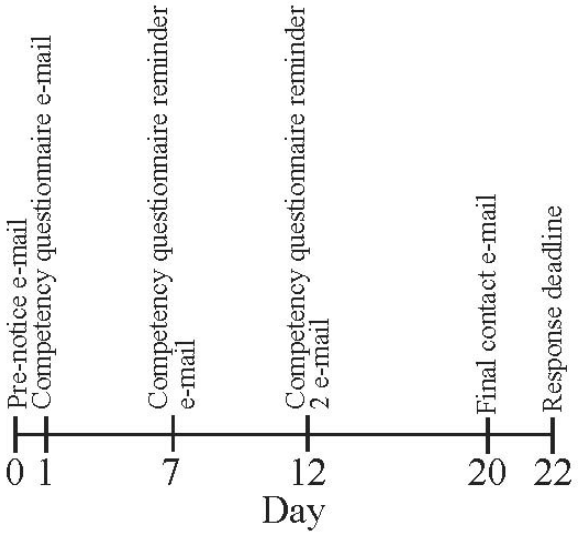


Figure 3: Second Round Data Collection Timeline

Incentives for Participation

As a result of the selection of not only electronic means as the primary mode of contact as well as restrictions set by the UCF IRB, the types of incentives that could be employed were limited. Therefore, in an effort to increase response rates and decrease non-response bias (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2009), the researcher utilized intrinsic (i.e., altruistic or non-monetary) incentives.

The researcher attempted to appeal to the sample members' altruistic values, those which stereotypically characterize people who work in the helping and human service fields (such as student affairs). Non-monetary incentives, including "appeals to the participants' sense of making a difference [in the field] through their involvement in the project" (Schuh, 2009, p. 64), along with information regarding how the results could benefit them as entry-level practitioners (e.g., providing copies of the results such that they could determine how they might be able to develop lacking competencies), encouraged participation (Groves, Cialdini, & Couper, 1992). Participants, within the competency questionnaire e-mail (i.e., second contact) and the web greeting and survey end pages (i.e., thank you and screen-out) within Zoomerang, were reminded that the researcher would send the results to all sample members at the conclusion of the study.

Confidentiality and Anonymity

The researcher was able to keep data confidential. To ensure an ethical study, the researcher provided an assurance to sample members that their responses would not be individually released. Only the researcher had access to the data submitted by participants. With regard to data security, the researcher added password protection to the document that included the sample list from ACPA and the Excel Spreadsheet that contained the responses. Only the researcher had access to these two documents. In addition, no personally identifiable information was released by the researcher at any time.

In some online questionnaires, it can be difficult to ensure anonymity of responses. Such was the case in this study. Even though the questionnaires did not elicit

participant names, anonymity became an issue in this study due to the desire to track who had responded, in an effort to send reminder contacts to increase response rates (as suggested by Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2009). This process, while not anonymous, was not believed to have increased the non-response rate since most of the items were not considered sensitive in nature.

Data Return

As the researcher utilized online survey software, data return began almost immediately upon initial e-mailing of the questionnaire hyperlink to participants. For the first several days of the questionnaire going "live," the researcher conducted review of the incoming data to monitor progress, as suggested by Dillman, Smyth, and Christian (2009). This included checking, for example, for patterns of incomplete responses and response rejections (i.e., a large quantity of the sample not meeting the criteria of working in entry-level positions), thus allowing the researcher to identify any problems or concern areas that may not have been resolved through pretesting and the pilot studies. None of the aforementioned issues were discovered.

Screen-Out and Response Review

The researcher continuously reviewed responses of those who were screened out via the initial questionnaire items. The responses of those participants who met all definitional criteria but who indicated that they did *not* believe that they served in entry-level positions were individually reviewed. If the researcher believed that the reasons given still qualified them for participation in the study, then they were re-entered into it via a new survey link, which included all competency and demographic items, but did not

include the initial screening questions. In the first round, 13 screened-out sample members were added back into the study. In the second round, five were added back in. In total, 18 sample members were asked to continue in the study after being initially screened out.

While not screened out via the questionnaire, three participant response sets were removed from the final data set. Two sample members chose to answer only the screening and demographic items, skipping all competency items. As the competency items served as the purpose of the study, the researcher removed both response sets. In addition, the researcher removed the response set for a person who was determined to work for a leadership development company. While the person met the criteria of the screening questions, it was clear upon review of the demographic items that the person did not work at an institution of higher education, the setting implied in the researcher's purpose.

Delivery Problems

As with any contact method, sending an e-mail to sample members may result in returned or undeliverable messages due to a number of reasons, including incorrect e-mail addresses or full inboxes. Such was the case for this study, in which there were 47 returned or undeliverable messages (39 in the first round and 8 in the second round). This issue was most apparent in the first contact with sample members, which returned a total of 40 messages (33 in the first round and 7 in the second round). Upon receiving a returned or undeliverable message, the researcher reviewed the e-mail address to determine if it was obviously entered incorrectly (e.g., 'yahoo' or 'gmail' was spelled

incorrectly). When it was possible to determine the error, the researcher re-sent the message to the designated sample member. The researcher logged the e-mail addresses that could not be rectified and removed those members from their respective sample.

Response Rate

First Round

In the first round, the pre-notice e-mail was originally sent to 820 randomly selected sample members via the researcher's personal e-mail account. As a result of having 33 undeliverable mail messages (either returned immediately or, at times, up to a week later), the researcher sent the pre-notice e-mail to 13 new sample members to create a list of 800 e-mails. The competency questionnaire e-mail was originally sent, via Zoomerang, to the addresses of the 800 remaining sample members. After this second contact was sent, six more undeliverable mail messages were received. Based on Zoomerang functionality, it was impossible for the researcher to know if every contact e-mail was in fact delivered. Therefore, it is believed that 794 sample members may have received the questionnaire hyperlink at some point. Fifteen sample members opted out of the study, an option provided by Zoomerang, leaving the number of eligible sample members at 779 (i.e., 794 delivered – 15 opt outs).

There were 186 total completions, including 5 from sample members who were added back into the study after being screened out. As mentioned previously, the researcher removed two data sets as a result of the lack of response to the competency items, leaving 184 usable completions. Seventy eight sample members attempted to respond to the questionnaire but were legitimately screened out (i.e., were not added back

into the study after researcher review). Therefore, 262 (i.e., 184 usable completions + 78 screen-outs) sample members responded to the request for participation, yielding a response rate of 33.6% (i.e., 262 responses / 779 sample members) for the first round.

Second Round

In the second round, the pre-notice e-mail was originally sent to 150 randomly selected sample members via the researcher's personal e-mail account. As a result of having six undeliverable mail messages returned immediately and assuming that there would likely be an additional undeliverable mail message returned at a later date, the researcher sent the pre-notice e-mail to seven more sample members in an attempt to create a final list of 150 e-mails. In the end, none of these replacement e-mails were returned, and the researcher sent the competency questionnaire e-mail, via Zoomerang, to the addresses of 151 sample members. After this second contact was sent, one more undeliverable mail message was received. It is believed that 150 sample members may have received the questionnaire hyperlink at some point. In this round, no sample members opted out of the study, leaving the number of eligible sample members at 150.

There were 41 total completions, including 4 from sample members who were added back into the study after being screened out. As mentioned previously, the researcher removed one data set as a result of the member's work setting, leaving 40 usable completions. Sixteen sample members attempted to respond to the questionnaire but were legitimately screened out (i.e., were not added back into the study after researcher review). The researcher classified the aforementioned removed data set as a screen-out since it was not the intent for that member to be able to respond to the

questionnaire items, providing 17 screened out responses. Therefore, 57 (i.e., 40 usable completions + 17 screen-outs) sample members responded to the request for participation, yielding a response rate of 38% (i.e., 57 responses / 150 sample members) for the second round.

Total Response Rate

Between the two rounds, there were a total of 944 (i.e., 794 in the first round + 150 in the second round) eligible sample members. There were 15 opt outs, all of which were in the first round, leaving the number of eligible sample members at 929 (i.e., 944 delivered – 15 opt outs). In addition, there was a total of 224 (i.e., 184 in the first round + 40 in the second round) usable completions and 95 (i.e., 78 in the first round + 17 in the second round) screen-outs. Therefore, 319 (i.e., 224 usable completions + 95 screen-outs) total sample members responded to the request for participation, yielding a total response rate of 34.3% (i.e., 319 responses / 929 sample members). See Table 3 for a summary of the calculation of response rates.

Table 3 Response Rate Calculations

	First round	Second round	Total
Screen-out	78	17	95
Useable completions	184	40	224
Total responses	262	57	319
Questionnaires delivered	794	150	944
Opt out	15	0	15
Eligible members	779	150	929
Response rate	33.6%	38.0%	34.3%

Response Rate Issues

While the researcher had hoped for a higher response rate, considering a number of issues, the overall rate attained is satisfactory and acceptable. One issue was timing, mostly of the second round. Due to the timing of the first round, for which the response deadline was in early November, the second round encompassed the Thanksgiving holiday. This timing likely contributed to a lack of responses around this time.

Next, it is assumed that a number of sample members did not respond because they did not receive the message, were unavailable, did not believe they were eligible, or were not employed in the field of student affairs. First, while a number of e-mails were returned or undeliverable, thus confirming non-receipt of a message, the researcher believes that not all messages sent through Zoomerang were in fact received. This possibility was substantiated by Zoomerang (Market Tools, Inc., 2009, ¶ 2). There was no way to determine if a sample member did in fact receive each contact or to know how many messages fell into this category. Second, there were a number (approximately 10 in the first round and 3 in the second round) of automatic (i.e., "out of office") replies to the researcher's contacts, a result of extended leave including maternity, illness, vacation, and unknown circumstances. Third, while no contact stated that respondents had to be serving in entry-level positions in order to participate, some sample members not serving in entry-level positions may have assumed this and ignored the request for participation. Even though these sample members would have been screened out, it would nonetheless have been better for response rates for them to have been screened out as opposed to not attempting to participate at all. In addition, these sample members may have decided not to respond because they saw no direct benefit to themselves (i.e., felt that since they were

past the entry-level phase, responding about entry-level competencies would not serve a personal benefit). Fourth, and related to the previous eligibility issue, it was assumed that most sample members who no longer worked in the field (but whose ACPA membership had not lapsed at the time of the study), did not attempt to participate. Again, they would have been screened out, but it would have been desirable for the researcher (via the questionnaire), as opposed to the sample members, to determine eligibility.

Statistical Procedures and Data Analysis

Variables

In this study, the dependent variable was the degree of importance that a competency was given by participants. There were a number of independent variables (e.g., gender, age, institutional enrollment, and possession or lack thereof of a degree from a student affairs graduate preparation program) that could have potentially affected a participant's responses. In this study, however, the two main variables of interest included institutional type and primary functional area of work, as these two characteristics have been the focus of literature regarding potential differences in competency needs within student affairs positions.

General Analysis

Data were collected online, thus eliminating researcher data entry. As per Zoomerang functionality, data were transferred into Microsoft Excel and then into PASW (formerly known as SPSS) Statistics 17 in order to perform statistical analysis.

It should be noted that the response options for the demographic information (e.g., functional area and institutional type) were nominal measures. The degree to which competencies were deemed important by participants was measured by a Likert scale, creating an ordinal measure. For statistical purposes, however, Likert scales that measure intensity are typically treated as interval measures because the difference between numbers on the scale are assumed to be equivalent (Nardi, 2006; Upcraft & Schuh, 1996).

Upon analyzing and comparing participant responses within the questionnaire, the researcher was able to determine the degree to which the 75 re-written basic student affairs competencies were needed in entry-level positions and if differences existed for entry-level positions in different functional areas and at different types of institutions, as discussed in chapter 4.

Question Response Analysis

Research Question 1

To what degree are the competencies important for work in entry-level positions, according to entry-level practitioners?

The 75 re-written competency items were utilized to answer Research Question 1. Each of these items was rated on a Likert scale from 1 (*not important or applicable to me in my current position*) to 5 (*extremely important to me in my current position*). As these data were treated as interval measures, the statistics utilized to analyze the responses for each competency included the mean and standard deviation.

In addition to these basic statistics, the researcher conducted exploratory factor analysis on the competency items within each SCPC cluster to group those that were "moderately or highly correlated with one another" (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009, p. 334). As the instrument elicited many demographic data (including gender, approximate age, number of years in the field, possession or lack thereof of a degree from a student affairs graduate preparation program), the researcher ran additional analyses on the factors and individual competency items removed from factor analysis, rather than on 75 individual competency items. To determine if there was a difference in the degree of importance for responses between groups within a demographic variable, the researcher utilized the analysis of variance (ANOVA) procedure, which compares "the means of two or more groups in order to decide whether the observed differences between them represent a chance occurrence or a systematic effect" (Shavelson, 1996, p. 371). If the *F* statistic was found to be statistically significant ($p < .05$), post hoc analysis was run when applicable (i.e., when more than two groups were being compared) to determine which group mean or means were statistically different from the others. Since group sizes were unequal and there were a relatively small number of means to compare, the researcher selected the Bonferroni t-test for post hoc analysis (Plichta & Garzon, 2009).

Research Question 2

What difference, if any, exists in the degree to which the competencies are important for work in entry-level positions, according to entry-level practitioners who work in different functional areas?

To determine if there was a difference in the degree of importance for responses between participants in the different functional areas, the researcher utilized the ANOVA procedure. In the current study, the functional area questionnaire item provided the opportunity to elicit 15 groups, one per functional area as well as the "other" category. As discussed in chapter 4, functional area responses were condensed into four groups to facilitate analysis. When the *F* statistic was found to be statistically significant ($p < .05$), post hoc analysis using the Bonferroni t-test was run to determine which group mean or means were statistically different from the others.

Research Question 3

What difference, if any, exists in the degree to which the competencies are important for work in entry-level positions, according to entry-level practitioners who work in different institutional types?

To determine if there was a difference in the degree of importance for responses between participants working at different institutional types, the researcher utilized the ANOVA procedure. In the current study, the institutional type questionnaire item provided the opportunity to elicit five groups, one per institutional type. As discussed in chapter 4, responses were received for only three institutional types, although one type was removed for analysis purposes. As a result of having only two groups (i.e., institutional types) to compare, when the *F* statistic was found to be statistically significant ($p < .05$), post hoc analysis was not needed.

Authorization to Conduct and Requirements of the Study

Institutional Review Board

As this study involved human participants, the researcher, prior to data collection, obtained authorization from the UCF IRB in an effort to ensure that their rights and safety would be protected. The study was approved as research exempt from IRB review (see Appendix O for a copy of the letter). This approval was disclosed in the pre-notice e-mail (see Appendix J), which was sent to all sample members. A brief reminder of IRB approval was included in the competency questionnaire e-mail (see Appendix K).

As previously discussed, the researcher provided confidentiality for all participants. While anonymity was not guaranteed, the inherent risks to the participant were low as a result of the lack of sensitivity of the subject matter. In addition, no personally identifiable information was or will be released by the researcher at any time.

Associational Support

"People are more likely to comply with a request if it comes from an authoritative source that has been legitimized by larger society to make such requests and expect compliance (Cialdini, 1984; Groves et al., 1992)" (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2009, p. 28). Groves, Cialdini, and Couper (1992) further add that people are more likely to respond to the request of a person or organization (e.g., professional association) that they like.

The researcher, in an effort to provide this kind of legitimacy to the study, contacted the chairs of both ACPA's Standing Committee on Graduate Students and New Professionals and NASPA's New Professionals and Graduate Students Knowledge

Committee. Since these entities exist within their respective associations to promote and discuss entry-level issues, both committed their support to the research, including allowing the researcher to indicate their support within participant contacts (see Appendices P and Q for letters of support). Additionally, both entities offered the use of their electronic mailing lists, thus providing the option of creating a convenience sample. The researcher chose instead to utilize a random sample, as discussed in Population and Sample. The researcher asked the Chair of the ACPA Standing Committee to send an e-mail in support of study participation to her electronic mailing list, in the hopes that many sample members would receive the e-mail and be encouraged to respond (see Appendix R for the letter). This e-mail was sent to the Standing Committee mailing list a few days prior to the researcher sending the first round competency questionnaire e-mail.

Also mentioned in Population and Sample is the source of the sample. The researcher contacted both the ACPA and NASPA national offices to discuss support, including securing a sample of their members for the study. Both associations have strict policies regarding the release of member information (including the inability to release e-mail addresses). However, since the researcher was utilizing ACPA's competency report, this association granted the researcher access to the e-mail addresses of its entry-level members (see Appendix S for the letter of support). This special access was granted under the conditions that the e-mail addresses be used only for this study.

In addition, the researcher received a $1,320 grant from the ACPA Educational Leadership Foundation, the "fundraising arm of ACPA" (ACPA Educational Leadership Foundation, 2009, ¶ 1). This grant was awarded to help the researcher fund such items as

pilot study gift cards, paper, multivariate statistics assistance, and document acquisition for the literature review.

Originality Score

As of the Fall 2008 semester, UCF "requires all students submitting a thesis or dissertation as part of their graduate degree requirements to first submit their electronic document through Turnitin.com [iParadigms, 2009] for advisement purposes and for review of originality" (UCF College of Graduate Studies, 2009, Originality section, ¶ 1). The researcher submitted chapters 1 and 2 and received a combined score, excluding quoted items, of 6%. Chapter 3 was submitted separately at a later date. With quoted items excluded, this chapter received a score of 4%. Finally, chapters 4 and 5 were submitted. Excluding quoted items, these two chapters received a combined score of 5%. These scores were lower than the maximum 10% allowed by the dissertation chair. Upon review of the matched items in all three submissions, the researcher re-worded several phrases in an effort to further reduce the scores. Most matched items were numbers, names (e.g., book titles and competency names) or generic phrases, most related to student affairs, competencies, or statistics.

Summary

The purpose of the study was to determine which competencies were important for entry-level student affairs positions, according to entry-level student affairs professionals. The researcher, utilizing a survey design, asked a random sample of entry-level practitioners to rate the importance of a list of competencies. Their responses were analyzed and are discussed in chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study was to determine (a) the degree to which the competencies listed in the 2007 Steering Committee on Professional Competencies (SCPC) report were important for work in entry-level student affairs positions, according to entry-level practitioners; (b) the difference, if any, in the degree to which the competencies were important for work in entry-level positions, according to entry-level practitioners who worked in different functional areas of the field; and (c) the difference, if any, in the degree to which the competencies were important for work in entry-level positions, according to entry-level practitioners who worked in different institutional types. As the study produced a large amount of data, the researcher summarized the location of the results, for easy reference, in Table 4.

Table 4 Summary of Result Tables

Result	Tables
Respondent demographics	5-11
Descriptive statistics for competency items	12-19
Factor analysis outcome	40-41
Mean differences based on years in position	20-21
Mean differences based on years in field	22-23
Mean differences based on age	24-25
Mean differences based on gender	26-27
Mean differences based on highest educational degree earned	28-29
Mean differences based on degree in student affairs/related area	30-31
Mean differences based on institutional full-time enrollment	32-33
Mean differences based on functional area	34-35
Mean differences based on institutional type	36-37

Demographics

The researcher received 224 useable questionnaire responses. A majority of respondents had served in their position or field for less than two years; over 80% had served in their position or field for less than three years (see Tables 5 and 6, respectively), thus indicating the level of experience of these entry-level practitioners. An interesting point is worth noting regarding the comparison between these two demographic items. It would seem logical that the number of years in the field would be at least as much as the number of years in the position (i.e., a respondent should have worked in the field for at least as long as he or she has worked in the current full-time position). That this is not true for those working in the field for less than two years led the researcher to believe that one of a couple of possibilities arose. The most likely reason for this inconsistency is that respondents may have misunderstood one or both questionnaire items, counting time within the field or their current full-time positions incorrectly. It is additionally possible that some positions may have been restructured, moving from academic to student affairs. In this case, a respondent may not have felt that he or she had worked in the field for as long as he or she had worked in the position.

Table 5 Respondent Years in Current Position

Number of years	*n*	%	Cumulative %
More than 0 years but less than 1 year	62	27.7	27.7
More than 1 year but less than 2 years	95	42.4	70.1
More than 2 years but less than 3 years	42	18.8	88.8
More than 3 years but less than 4 years	16	7.1	96.0
More than 4 years but less than 5 years	9	4.0	100.0
Total	224	100.0	

Table 6 Respondent Years in Field of Student Affairs

Number of years	*n*	%	Cumulative %
More than 0 years but less than 1 year	44	19.6	19.6
More than 1 year but less than 2 years	77	34.4	54.0
More than 2 years but less than 3 years	59	26.3	80.4
More than 3 years but less than 4 years	27	12.1	92.4
More than 4 years but less than 5 years	17	7.6	100.0
Total	224	100.0	

The researcher adapted the functional areas utilized by the American College Personnel Association (ACPA) for the instrument. This included 14 areas and the ability to select "other" as a respondent's primary function (see the questionnaire in Appendix F). Eleven "other" areas were specified by respondents, including Alcohol and Other Drug Education, Community Service, Commuter/Adult Services, and "hybrid" positions (i.e., combination of functional areas, typical of smaller institutions).

As was expected for entry-level respondents, Residence Life/Housing by far had the most respondents (57.6%; $n = 129$). There were no respondents representing Counseling or International Student Services. In addition, 20 of the 23 functional areas represented by the sample had six or fewer respondents (see Table 7). As a result of the large number of areas, low number of respondents within most of the areas, and the need to reduce areas for further analyses, the researcher grouped functional areas with similar purpose, resulting in three overarching areas and a "miscellaneous" area. Academic Advising and Academic Resources were combined into one functional area group ($n = 23$), with Academic Assistance serving as the overarching purpose. Greek Affairs, Leadership Development, Student Activities/Student Union, Combo (Greek Affairs,

Leadership Programs, Community Service), Community Service, and Student Activities Within an Academic Affairs Unit were grouped into one functional area group (n = 40), with Student Involvement serving as the overarching purpose. Residence Life/Housing, with the largest representation, was not grouped with any other areas. The fourth grouping consisted of all remaining functional areas (i.e., Admissions/Enrollment Management, Alcohol and Other Drug Education, Career Planning/Placement Services, Combo [Academic Advising and Residence Life], Combo [Learning Community and Student Programs], Financial Aid, GLBTQ Awareness/Services, Judicial Affairs, Multicultural Affairs/Services, Non-traditional [Commuter/Adult] Services, Orientation/New Student Programs, Parent Programs, Recreational Sports/Services, and Retention), characterized in this study as Other Student Affairs (n = 32).

Three institutional types were represented within participant responses. There were 111 respondents from four-year public institutions and 111 respondents from four-year private institutions. There were no respondents from two-year public or two-year private institutions. Two respondents indicated that they worked at an "other" type of institution, both of which were for-profit institutions. Respondents were asked to further classify their institution according to the categories presented by Hirt (2006). While not mutually exclusive in classification, 100 respondents worked at liberal arts institutions, 48 at religiously affiliated institutions, 80 at research universities, 4 at Hispanic-serving institutions, and 2 at women's institutions. No respondents indicated that they worked at community colleges or historically black colleges or universities.

Table 7 Respondent Functional Area

Functional area	*n*	%
Academic advising	22	9.8
Academic resources[a]	1	0.4
Admissions/enrollment management	1	0.4
Alcohol and other drug education[a]	2	0.9
Career planning/placement services	6	2.7
Combo (Academic advising and residence life)[a]	1	0.4
Combo (Greek affairs, leadership programs, community service)[a]	1	0.4
Combo (Learning community and student programs)[a]	1	0.4
Community service[a]	4	1.8
Financial aid[a]	1	0.4
GLBTQ awareness/services	1	0.4
Greek affairs	5	2.2
Judicial affairs	4	1.8
Leadership development	4	1.8
Multicultural affairs/services	4	1.8
Non-traditional (commuter/adult) services[a]	3	1.3
Orientation/new student programs	4	1.8
Parent programs[a]	1	0.4
Recreational sports/services	2	0.9
Residence life/housing	129	57.6
Retention[a]	1	0.4
Student activities within an academic affairs unit[a]	1	0.4
Student activities/student union	25	11.2
Total	224	100.0

[a]Functional area added as a result of "Other" option on instrument.

For the most part, institutional size was well-represented within the study (see Table 8). The largest representation ($n = 45$) came from institutions with an approximate full-time student enrollment of 1,000-2,499.

Table 8 Respondent Institutional Full-Time Student Enrollment

Full-time enrollment	*n*	%	Cumulative %
Under 1,000	3	1.3	1.3
1,000-2,499	45	20.1	21.4
2,500-4,999	32	14.3	35.7
5,000-9,999	27	12.1	47.8
10,000-14,999	26	11.6	59.4
15,000-19,999	24	10.7	70.1
20,000-29,999	26	11.6	81.7
30,000-39,999	19	8.5	90.2
40,000 and above	20	8.9	99.1
Unsure / none of the above	2	0.9	100.0
Total	224	100.0	

In terms of personal characteristics of the respondents, 67.4% (n = 151) were female and 32.6% (n = 73) were male. Almost 95% were between the ages of 22 and 30 years old (see Table 9), which was to be expected considering that only entry-level practitioners were included.

Table 9 Respondent Approximate Age

Age	*n*	%	Cumulative %
22-25	86	38.4	38.4
26-30	125	55.8	94.2
31-35	10	4.5	98.7
36-40	3	1.3	100.0
Total	224	100.0	

Regarding the educational level of the respondents, just over 90% held master's degrees (see Table 10), and almost 90% held a degree in a student affairs or related area (see Table 11). This percentage was higher than expected, although it is corroborated by those, including Kretovics (2002), who believe that possession of this type of degree has become more of an expectation within the field. Since 204 respondents held post-baccalaureate degrees and 200 of these degrees were in a student affairs or related area (since no baccalaureate-level student affairs programs exist, to the best of the researcher's knowledge), all but 24 respondents were likely trained in student affairs or related topics.

Table 10 Respondent Highest Degree Earned

Education level	*n*	%	Cumulative %
Bachelor's	20	8.9	8.9
Master's	203	90.6	99.5
Doctorate	1	0.4	100.0
Total	224	100.0	

Table 11 Respondent Possession of Degree in Student Affairs or Related Area

Degree possession	*n*	%
No	22	9.8
Yes	200	89.3
Prefer not to respond	2	0.9
Total	224	100.0

Response Analysis

Research Question 1

To what degree are the competencies important for work in entry-level positions, according to entry-level practitioners?

Descriptive Statistics for All Respondents

Advising and Helping

When reviewing data from all respondents, the SCPC competency cluster Advising and Helping ($M = 4.27$, $SD = 0.46$) appeared to be the most important for entry-level work. This cluster included 10 of 11 competency items that were rated at least 4, or *very important to me in my current position* (see Table 12). Two items, "Ability to listen actively (e.g., paraphrase, summarize, clarify) to students and colleagues" ($M = 4.63$, $SD = 0.56$) and "Ability to establish rapport with others (including students and colleagues)" ($M = 4.76$, $SD = 0.48$) were rated above 4.5. The only item rated less than 4 was "Ability to challenge colleagues effectively" ($M = 3.53$, $SD = 0.96$).

Student Learning and Development

The SCPC competency cluster Student Learning and Development ($M = 3.50$, $SD = 0.75$) was determined to be "important" for entry-level work. Within this cluster, four of five items were rated less than 4 (see Table 13). The lowest rated item in this cluster was "Knowledge of various learning theories/models" ($M = 2.93$, $SD = 0.96$). Only one item, "Knowledge of my own development and how that influences my view of the

development of others" (M = 4.03, SD = 0.93), was rated higher than 4, or *very important to me in my current position*.

Table 12 Descriptive Statistics for Advising and Helping Cluster

Abridged competency item	*N*	Mean	Standard deviation
Listen actively[1]	224	4.63	0.56
Nonverbal communication[2]	224	4.17	0.80
Establish rapport[3]	224	4.76	0.48
Student multiple issues[4]	224	4.41	0.75
Decision making[5]	224	4.30	0.72
Set goals[6]	223	4.00	0.81
Problem-solving[7]	224	4.42	0.64
Challenge students[8]	222	4.34	0.83
Challenge colleagues[9]	220	3.53	0.96
Encourage others[10]	222	4.25	0.74
Refer to resources[11]	224	4.20	0.90

Note. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.

Table 13 Descriptive Statistics for Student Learning and Development Cluster

Abridged competency item	*N*	Mean	Standard deviation
Types of theories[12]	224	3.04	0.99
Learning theories/models[13]	222	2.93	0.96
Individual characteristics[14]	224	3.98	0.97
Own development[15]	224	4.03	0.93
Use theories[16]	224	3.54	0.99

Note. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item number (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.

Pluralism and Inclusion

The SCPC Pluralism and Inclusion cluster (M = 4.00, SD = 0.74) was found to be "very important" for entry-level work. All competency items within the cluster were rated near 4, with a difference of 0.32 between the highest and lowest mean (see Table 14). The lowest rated item in this cluster was "Ability to assess my level of multicultural awareness" (M = 3.88, SD = 0.96), and the highest was "Understanding of the impact of things such as culture, attitudes, values, beliefs, assumptions, biases, identity, heritage, and life experiences on my work" (M = 4.20, SD = 0.82).

Table 14 Descriptive Statistics for Pluralism and Inclusion Cluster

Abridged competency item	*N*	Mean	Standard deviation
Multicultural awareness[17]	224	3.88	0.96
Impact on work[18]	223	4.20	0.82
Deconstruct assumptions[19]	224	3.95	0.92
Expand skills/knowledge[20]	224	4.05	0.86
Facilitate dialogue[21]	223	3.91	1.02

Note. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.

Ethics

The SCPC Ethics cluster (M = 3.34, SD = 0.78) was found to be "important" for entry-level work. Within this cluster, four of the six items were rated above 3, minimally *important to me in my current position* (see Table 15). Only one item, "Ability to recognize ethical issues in the course of my job" (M = 4.26, SD = 0.89), was rated above 4, or *very important to me in my current position*. The two lowest rated items were

"Understanding of the ethical statements of ACPA and NASPA [National Association of Student Personnel Administrators]" (M = 2.71, SD = 1.15) and "Understanding of the ethical statements of other professional associations relevant to my work (e.g., NACA, ACUHO-I, NODA, SACSA, AACC)" (M = 2.51, SD = 1.15).

Table 15 Descriptive Statistics for Ethics Cluster

Abridged competency item	*N*	Mean	Standard deviation
ACPA/NASPA statements[22]	224	2.71	1.15
Other statements[23]	224	2.51	1.15
Ethical principles[24]	223	3.07	1.11
Act in accordance[25]	224	3.79	1.01
Recognize ethical issues[26]	224	4.26	0.89
Resources to resolve issues[27]	224	3.64	1.01

Note. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.

Leadership and Management/Administration

The SCPC Leadership and Management/Administration cluster (M = 3.64, SD = 0.62) appeared to be "important" for entry-level work. Overall, 26 of 27 items were rated at least 3, with 6 of those being rated above 4 (see Table 16). The highest rated item was "Knowledge of the fundamentals of teamwork and teambuilding" (M = 4.30, SD = 0.89) within the Human Resources subcompetency area. Only one item, "Knowledge of major public policy issues (e.g., national security, immigration, environmental protection, health care) and decisions at the national, state, and local levels" (M = 2.75, SD = 1.16)

within the Social Responsibility/Civic Engagement subcompetency area, was rated below 3.

Legal Foundations

When reviewing data from all respondents, the SCPC competency cluster Legal Foundations (M = 2.81, SD = 0.96) was determined to be "somewhat important" for entry-level work. Five of seven items within the cluster were rated below 3, with a difference of 0.52 between the highest and lowest mean (see Table 17). The lowest rated item was "Understanding of contract law and how it affects professional practice" (M = 2.53, SD = 1.30). Only two items, "Understanding of the legal differences between public and private institutions of higher education" (M = 3.05, SD = 1.28) and "Knowledge of when to seek advice from campus legal counsel" (M = 3.02, SD = 1.21), were rated above 3, or *important to me in my current position*.

Assessment, Evaluation, and Research

The SCPC Assessment, Evaluation, and Research cluster (M = 3.47, SD = 0.91) was found to be "important" for entry-level work. All nine items within the cluster were rated above 3, or *important to me in my current position*, although none were rated above 4 (see Table 18). The highest rated item was "Ability to conduct program evaluations" (M = 3.82, SD = 1.10), while the lowest was "Ability to assess the quality of a study that uses quantitative methods, including validity and reliability" (M = 3.09, SD = 1.19).

Table 16 Descriptive Statistics for Leadership and Management/Administration Cluster

Abridged competency item	*N*	Mean	Standard deviation
Resource management			
Operate facility[28]	224	3.00	1.35
Host event in facility[29]	224	3.57	1.13
Budget management[30]	224	3.61	1.18
Use technology[31]	223	4.05	0.92
Green methods[32]	224	3.28	1.07
Human resources			
Principles of conflict[33]	224	3.72	0.99
Conflict resolution[34]	224	4.11	0.98
Teamwork/teambuilding[35]	224	4.30	0.89
Motivational techniques[36]	223	4.24	0.90
Supervision techniques[37]	222	4.11	1.16
Hiring techniques[38]	220	3.32	1.24
Institutional hiring policies[39]	222	3.15	1.20
Organizational development			
Identify organizational goals[40]	223	3.37	1.03
Tasks within institution[41]	223	3.63	1.08
Tasks within individual[42]	220	3.92	0.90
Cultural landscape[43]	221	4.04	0.98
Organizational structure[44]	221	3.92	0.97
Institutional governance[45]	220	3.44	1.10
Political landscape[46]	222	3.96	0.96
Implement change[47]	221	3.65	1.06
Organizational improvement[48]	222	3.57	0.97
Leadership styles[49]	221	3.60	1.11
Social responsibility/civic engagement			
Public policy issues[50]	223	2.75	1.16
Higher education issues[51]	223	3.46	1.04
Policy issues on campus[52]	223	3.88	0.96
Contribute to communities[53]	221	3.62	1.08
Ordinary people transform[54]	223	3.74	1.12

Note. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.

Table 17 Descriptive Statistics for Legal Foundations Cluster

Abridged competency item	*N*	Mean	Standard deviation
Differences public/private[55]	223	3.05	1.28
US Constitution[56]	223	2.85	1.20
Landmark case law[57]	222	2.81	1.17
Torts and negligence[58]	222	2.66	1.28
Contract law[59]	222	2.53	1.30
When seek advice[60]	223	3.02	1.21
Consult legal counsel[61]	221	2.74	1.27

Note. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.

Table 18 Descriptive Statistics for Assessment, Evaluation, and Research Cluster

Abridged competency item	*N*	Mean	Standard deviation
Professional literature[62]	223	3.57	1.03
Quality of qualitative[63]	221	3.25	1.16
Qualitative transfer to work[64]	221	3.22	1.19
Quality of quantitative[65]	223	3.09	1.19
Institutional policy[66]	223	3.22	1.19
Program evaluations[67]	221	3.82	1.10
Facilitate data collection[68]	220	3.63	1.11
Interpret data[69]	221	3.52	1.18
Use results[70]	222	3.62	1.12

Note. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.

Teaching

Finally, the SCPC Teaching cluster ($M = 3.57$, $SD = 0.99$) was determined to be "important" for entry-level work. All five items within the cluster were rated between 3

and 4, with a difference of 0.57 between the highest and lowest mean (see Table 19). The highest rated item was "Ability to construct learning outcomes for a program/initiative" (M = 3.84, SD = 1.04), and the lowest was "Ability to incorporate various learning theories/models into daily practice" (M = 3.27, SD = 1.18).

Table 19 Descriptive Statistics for Teaching Cluster

Abridged competency item	*N*	Mean	Standard deviation
Incorporate learning theories[71]	222	3.27	1.18
Construct learning outcomes[72]	223	3.84	1.04
Shape environment[73]	222	3.65	1.09
Assess effectiveness[74]	223	3.52	1.18
Incorporate results[75]	223	3.57	1.15

Note. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.

Summary

Of the 75 individual competency items, 20 were given an importance rating of at least 4, indicating that they were minimally *very important to me in my current position*; 46 were rated between 3 and 4, indicating they were at least *important to me in my current position*; and 9 were rated between 2 and 3, indicating they were at least *somewhat important to me in my current position*. No individual competency item was rated below 2, indicating that all 75 competency items were, minimally, "somewhat important" for entry-level positions. In fact, 88% (i.e., 66 = 20 + 46) of the competency items were found to be, at the minimum, "important" for their entry-level positions.

Respondents rated their 10 most important individual competency items as follows: “Ability to establish rapport with others (including students and colleagues)” (the highest rated competency; *M* = 4.76, *SD* = 0.48), “Ability to listen actively (e.g., paraphrase, summarize, clarify) to students and colleagues” (*M* = 4.63, *SD* = 0.56), “Ability to facilitate problem-solving” (*M* = 4.42, *SD* = 0.64), “Ability to work with students on multiple issues (e.g., academic, personal) simultaneously” (*M* = 4.41, *SD* = 0.75), “Ability to challenge students effectively” (*M* = 4.34, *SD* = 0.83), “Ability to help an individual in his/her decision making process” (*M* = 4.30, *SD* = 0.72), and “Ability to encourage students and colleagues effectively” (*M* = 4.25, *SD* = 0.74), all of which belong to the Advising and Helping cluster; “Knowledge of the fundamentals of teamwork and teambuilding” (*M* = 4.30, *SD* = 0.89) and “Ability to use basic motivational techniques with others (including students and staff)” (*M* = 4.24, *SD* = 0.90), which belong to the Human Resources subcompetency area of the Leadership and Administration/Management cluster; and “Ability to recognize ethical issues in the course of my job” (*M* = 4.26, *SD* = 0.89), which belongs to the Ethics cluster.

In reviewing the 10 most important individual competency items, 7 belong to the Advising and Helping cluster, which is understandable since advising and helping students serves as the practical core of what student affairs practitioners, especially entry-level practitioners, do every day. Even the two items in the Leadership and Administration/Management cluster address the concept of advising and helping students individually (via motivation techniques) and within groups (via teamwork and teambuilding).

Respondents rated their 10 least important individual competency items as follows: “Understanding of the ethical statements of other professional associations relevant to my work (e.g., NACA, ACUHO-I, NODA, SACSA, AACC)” (the lowest rated competency; *M* = 2.51, *SD* = 1.15) and “Understanding of the ethical statements of ACPA and NASPA” (*M* = 2.71, *SD* = 1.15), which belong to the Ethics cluster; “Knowledge of major public policy issues (e.g., national security, immigration, environmental protection, health care) and decisions at the national, state, and local levels” (*M* = 2.75, *SD* = 1.16), which belongs to the Social Responsibility/Civic Engagement subcompetency area of the Leadership and Administration/Management cluster; “Ability to utilize facilities management procedures to operate a facility” (*M* = 3.00, *SD* = 1.35), which belongs to the Resource Management subcompetency area of the Leadership and Administration/Management cluster; “Understanding of contract law and how it affects professional practice” (*M* = 2.53, *SD* = 1.30), “Understanding of what torts and negligence are and how they affect professional practice” (*M* = 2.66, *SD* = 1.28), “Ability to consult with campus legal counsel” (*M* = 2.74, *SD* = 1.27), “Knowledge of landmark civil rights, desegregation, and affirmative action case law that affects American higher education” (*M* = 2.81, *SD* = 1.17), and “Understanding of how the US Constitution influences the rights of students, faculty, and staff at public institutions” (*M* = 2.85, *SD* = 1.20), all of which belong to the Legal Foundations cluster; and “Knowledge of various learning theories/models” (*M* = 2.93, *SD* = 0.96), which belongs to the Student Learning and Development cluster.

In reviewing the 10 least important individual competency items, 5 belong to the Legal Foundations cluster. Perhaps these competencies were not as important for entry-

level practitioners as others because they were not applied or utilized in practitioners' daily work, either because these practitioners knew that experts (i.e., institutional lawyers) exist for this reason and/or because their supervisors were the ones making contact with legal counsel when questions or concerns arose. It may seem a bit surprising that two competency items belong to the Ethics cluster, but when one reviews which items they were, perhaps it makes sense that it was not quite as important for respondents to understand specifically the statements of the profession's associations (i.e., the *knowledge* of ethics) as it was to understand the general principles and how to recognize and resolve ethical dilemmas (i.e., the *practice* of ethics). At initial glance, it may also seem surprising that, as a result of the large percentage of participants who worked in residence life and housing (almost 60% of respondents), facility management procedures for the purpose of operating a facility (e.g., residence hall) fell within the 10 lowest rated individual competency items. However, many entry-level residence life and housing practitioners do not actually *operate* all aspects of the residence hall in which they live, but rather submit work orders and/or seek assistance from appropriate staff within the department (e.g., maintenance technician or director of facilities) when certain situations arise. Many times, it is more important for these entry-level staff members to properly address and refer issues than to actually fix them. In addition, entry-level practitioners not in residence life and housing are not as prone to manage a facility, so their responses also likely lowered the mean and contributed to the highest standard deviation of all individual competency items. Again, however, even the 10 least important individual competency items were found to be minimally "somewhat important" since all were rated above 2.

Factor Analysis

Background

Factor analysis is a statistical technique whose outcome can be both data summarization and data reduction (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, & Tatham, 2006). There are two classes of factor analysis: exploratory and confirmatory. As the researcher had no pre-determined notions regarding the nature and quantity of factors that existed within the set of variables, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was utilized (Thompson, 2004). EFA provides a researcher with the ability to determine how many factors, or underlying constructs, exist within a set of variables (in this case, a set of competency items), such that a smaller number of new variables that "incorporate the character and nature of the original variables" (Hair et al., p. 110) may be created and used in further analyses (e.g., analysis of variance).

As mentioned in chapter 3, there were 75 dependent variables (i.e., competency items) measured in this study. Running and reporting analyses regarding the differences between each of the 75 competency items and demographic data, such as possession or lack thereof of a degree in student affairs (Research Question 1), functional area (Research Question 2) and institutional type (Research Question 3), would be incredibly cumbersome. For example, determining if there was a difference in the degree of importance of each competency item between those who have a degree in a student affairs or related area and those who do not (one demographic item) would in and of itself result in 75 calculations (i.e., one per competency item). As the ability to explore differences of competencies on nine demographic items was desired, EFA was utilized to

reduce the number of variables, or competency items, into fewer variables, or factors. In this way, the researcher was able to run additional analyses on the factors, rather than on the 75 individual competency items.

It should be noted at this point that the researcher decided not to run an EFA on the grouping of the aforementioned 75 competency items. For one, this would have been complicated because of the number of decisions involved and requirements and conditions necessary to run this procedure (as discussed later). Next, but most importantly, EFA requires a minimum sample size and ratio of respondents to variables (also discussed later). In this study, performing EFA with 75 competency items would therefore have been inappropriate. Instead, the researcher decided to run 11 separate EFAs, one per SCPC-derived competency cluster and subcompetency area (for the cluster that was broken down into four areas), to determine what factors existed within each.

The first step in calculating any statistic is to verify that assumptions for its use are met. First, EFA requires that the variables used in the process are continuous (i.e., interval or ratio). This requirement poses a challenge to this study. As mentioned in chapter 3, the Likert scale which elicited feedback on the degree of importance of each competency item created an ordinal measure. For statistical purposes, though, a Likert scale that measures intensity is typically treated as an interval measure (Nardi, 2006; Upcraft & Schuh, 1996). Following this practice, then, allows for the requirement to be met for all 11 EFAs. As a result, however, all outcomes should be interpreted with some degree of caution (W. Nasby, personal communication, January 5, 2010). As the fulfillment of this requirement remained constant for all 11 EFAs, it is not discussed within the review of each one.

Second, EFA necessitates a minimum requirement for the number of participants. First, there should be, preferably, at least 100 participants, although some statisticians minimally allow 50 (Hair et al., 2006). In this study, 224 practitioners in entry-level student affairs positions responded to the survey, although it should be noted that not every practitioner responded to every competency item. In addition, the ratio of the number of respondents to the number of variables (in this case, competency items) should minimally be 5:1, although some statisticians prefer a higher ratio of respondents to variables (Hair et al.; Thompson, 2004). While the number of respondents included in the calculations differed for each of the 11 EFAs (due to the temporary removal of a participant who failed to respond to a competency item within the cluster being analyzed), the ratio was nonetheless always at least 19:1 (for the Advising and Helping cluster, which had the most competency items). As a result, this study met both criteria. Since the fulfillment of these requirements remained constant for all 11 EFAs, they are not discussed within the review of each one.

The third requirement for the use of EFA involves the correlation of competency items. First, a review of the correlations between competency items should reveal a "substantial number of correlations greater than .30" (Hair et al., 2006, p. 114). Second, the Bartlett test of sphericity must be statistically significant ($p < .05$), indicating "significant correlations among at least some of the variables" (Hair et al., p. 114). Finally, the measure of sampling adequacy overall, as well as for each individual competency item, should be greater than .50 (Hair et al.). If the measure of sampling adequacy for an individual competency item falls under this standard, that item should be

removed from the analysis. All 11 EFAs met these criteria, although the fulfillment of these requirements are discussed within the review of each one.

Upon verifying that assumptions are met, a researcher may proceed with deriving a factor solution among the variables in question. This process includes several decisions that lead to the creation of a solution that must meet several conditions (as discussed later). The first decision the researcher must make is which method of factor extraction to use. In this study, principal components analysis (PCA) was utilized. Likely the most frequently used method in EFA (Thompson, 2004), PCA "is used when the objective is to summarize original information (variance) in a minimum number of factors for prediction purposes" (Hair et al., 2006, p. 117). Once the analysis is run, the researcher must then decide how many factors to extract. While there are several techniques available to assist in this decision, there is not one that is generally accepted (Thompson). In this study, the researcher used a combination of three: Kaiser criterion, for which factors are extracted if they have an eigenvalue greater than 1.0; scree test, for which factors are extracted until the graphical plot of eigenvalues begins to level; and percentage of variance criterion, for which factors are extracted until at least 60% of the total variance is explained by them (Hair et al., Thompson). In this study, the number of factors extracted was decided when at least two of the three techniques were found to be in agreement. Another decision a researcher must make when performing EFA is which rotation method to use when more than one factor is extracted. Rotation "involves moving the factor axes measuring the locations of the measured variables in the factor space so that the nature of the underlying constructs becomes more obvious to the researcher" (Thompson, p. 38), thus leaving a factor model that is easier to interpret. In this study, the researcher selected orthogonal

rotation using the varimax method, as "usually when multiple factors are extracted, reasonable simple structure is realized with varimax rotation" (Thompson, p. 48).

Once these decisions are made and the analysis (i.e., first iteration of EFA) run, a researcher must then review the output to ensure that each variable within the factor model meets three conditions. A problematic variable should be removed and the analysis run again from the beginning (i.e., starting with the verification that assumptions for the use of EFA are met). First, the factor model must explain at least 50% of each variable's variance (i.e., the communality of each variable should be at least .50; Hair et al., 2006). Any variable that does not meet this criterion and has the lowest communality value should be removed first. The analysis should be run again (i.e., a new iteration), removing one variable at a time, until no variable has a communality lower than .50. At this point, the factor loadings should be reviewed to ensure that no variable has a complex structure (i.e., loading of at least .40 on more than one factor). Variables that do not meet this criterion may be removed at one time, until all remaining variables meet the communality and complex structure criteria. Finally, the factor loadings should be reviewed to ensure that each factor has more than one variable loading on it at a value of at least .40. If a factor has only one variable loading on it, that variable should be removed and the analysis run again. It should be noted that obtaining a final factor solution is an iterative process (W. Nasby, personal communication, January 5, 2010), with each analysis producing a new set of data tables. For the sake of succinctness, then, only the factor solution (i.e., outcome of the final iteration) is presented in this chapter.

As suggested by Hair et al. (2006), the researcher took one additional step in validating the outcome of the 11 factor analyses by testing each extracted factor's

reliability. The goal of obtaining a reliability score was to assess the consistency of the factor as a whole such that the researcher could justify computing a total score for the competency items that loaded within each factor. In this study, the researcher utilized Cronbach's alpha as the measure of reliability, for which the "generally agreed upon lower limit … is .70, although it may decrease to .60 in exploratory research" (Hair et al., p. 137). Cronbach's alpha is presented within each factor solution.

In the end, the factor solution must meet the aforementioned conditions. If a researcher finds a model that meets these requirements, and if the reliability is determined to be acceptable, then, as mentioned previously, the researcher is able to maintain confidence that fewer factor variables can be substituted for a number of the original variables for further analysis. In this study specifically, 16 factors were extracted (i.e., 16 factor variables were created, accounting for 60 individual competency items; see Appendix T for a summary), during which a total of 15 individual competency items were removed from analyses (see Appendix U).

Advising and Helping

The researcher examined whether any of the 11 competency items within the SCPC Advising and Helping cluster could be represented by one or more factors. Via the first five iterations of analysis, five individual competency items were removed due to their failure to meet conditions regarding either communality or complex structure (see Appendix U).

The researcher reviewed the assumptions for the sixth iteration. First, nine of the correlations between items were at least .30 (see Table 42 in Appendix V). Second, the

Bartlett test of sphericity was statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 344.03$, $df = 15$, $p < .01$). Third, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy was .76, higher than the suggested .50, for the overall set of items. Finally, the measure of sampling adequacy was greater than .50 for all individual items (see Table 43 in Appendix V). Therefore, all assumptions were met, indicating appropriate use of PCA.

The researcher then verified that the derived factor model met the aforementioned conditions. First, communalities of the six remaining items were at least .50, indicating that at least 50% of each item's variance was explained in the factor solution (see Table 44 in Appendix V). Second, no item had a complex structure (see Table 45 in Appendix V). Finally, as can be seen in Table 45 in Appendix V, more than one item loaded in each of the factors.

With these conditions met in the sixth iteration, two factors were extracted as per agreement among the Kaiser criterion (two eigenvalues greater than 1.0; see Table 46 in Appendix V), percentage of variance criterion (65.0% with two factors; see Table 46 in Appendix V), and scree test (two factors prior to leveling; see Figure 4 in Appendix V). Therefore, the information in the remaining six competency items could be represented by two factors. Factor 1, which explained 47.3% of the total variance, included four items: "Ability to help an individual in his/her decision making process," "Ability to help an individual set goals," "Ability to facilitate problem-solving," and "Ability to challenge students effectively." The researcher named this factor Advising and Developing Students. This factor's Cronbach's alpha ($\alpha = .78$) confirmed the reliability among these items. Factor 2, which explained 17.8% of the total variance, included two items: "Ability to listen actively (e.g., paraphrase, summarize, clarify) to students and

colleagues" and "Ability to use appropriate nonverbal communication with students and colleagues." The researcher named this factor Communication Skills. This factor's Cronbach's alpha ($\alpha = .62$) confirmed the reliability among these items. Together, these two factors explained 65.0% of the total variance in the items included within them. As a result of this process, the researcher was able to substitute the combination of the respective competency items loading in each factor for new factor variables (i.e., Advising and Developing Students and Communication Skills) in subsequent analyses.

Student Learning and Development

The researcher examined whether any of the five competency items within the SCPC Student Learning and Development cluster could be represented by one or more factors. The researcher reviewed the assumptions for the first iteration. First, all of the correlations between items were at least .03 (see Table 47 in Appendix V). Second, the Bartlett test of sphericity was statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 417.72$, $df = 10$, $p < .01$). Third, the KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy was .79, higher than the suggested .50, for the overall set of items. Finally, the measure of sampling adequacy was greater than .50 for all individual items (see Table 48 in Appendix V). Therefore, all assumptions were met, indicating appropriate use of PCA.

The researcher then verified that the derived factor model met the aforementioned conditions. First, communalities of the five original items were at least .50, indicating that at least 50% of each item's variance was explained in the factor solution (see Table 49 in Appendix V). Second, no item had a complex structure (see Table 50 in Appendix

V). Finally, as can be seen in Table 50 in Appendix V, more than one item loaded in the factor.

With these conditions met in the first iteration, one factor was extracted as per agreement among the Kaiser criterion (one eigenvalue greater than 1.0; see Table 51 in Appendix V) and percentage of variance criterion (59.2% with one factor, for which the researcher made a subjective decision to allow this percentage, as it was very close to the desired 60%; see Table 51 in Appendix V). Therefore, the information in the five original competency items could be represented by one factor. This factor, which explained 59.2% of the total variance, included the items "Knowledge of different types of theories (e.g., psychosocial and identity development, cognitive-structural)," "Knowledge of various learning theories/models," "Knowledge of how differences in individual characteristics (e.g., race, class, gender, age, sexual orientation, disability) can influence student development," "Knowledge of my own development and how that influences my view of the development of others," and "Knowledge of how to use formal and informal student development theories to enhance my work with students." The researcher named this factor Knowledge of Student Development Theory. This factor's Cronbach's alpha ($\alpha = .83$) confirmed the reliability among these items. As a result of this process, the researcher was able to substitute the combination of the five competency items loading in the factor for a new factor variable (i.e., Knowledge of Student Development Theory) in subsequent analyses.

Pluralism and Inclusion

The researcher examined whether any of the five competency items within the SCPC Pluralism and Inclusion cluster could be represented by one or more factors. Via the first iteration of analysis, one individual competency item was removed due to its failure to meet the condition regarding communality (see Appendix U).

The researcher reviewed the assumptions for the second iteration. First, all of the correlations between items were at least .30 (see Table 52 in Appendix V). Second, the Bartlett test of sphericity was statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 443.94$, $df = 6$, $p < .01$). Third, the KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy was .83, higher than the suggested .50, for the overall set of items. Finally, the measure of sampling adequacy was greater than .50 for all individual items (see Table 53 in Appendix V). Therefore, all assumptions were met, indicating appropriate use of PCA.

The researcher then verified that the derived factor model met the aforementioned conditions. First, communalities of the four remaining items were at least .50, indicating that at least 50% of each item's variance was explained in the factor solution (see Table 54 in Appendix V). Second, no item had a complex structure (see Table 55 in Appendix V). Finally, as can be seen in Table 55 in Appendix V, more than one item loaded in the factor.

With these conditions met in the second iteration, one factor was extracted as per agreement among the Kaiser criterion (one eigenvalue greater than 1.0; see Table 56 in Appendix V), percentage of variance criterion (73.1% with one factor; see Table 56 in Appendix V), and scree test (one factor prior to leveling; see Figure 5 in Appendix V). Therefore, the information in the remaining four competency items could be represented

by one factor. This factor, which explained 73.1% of the total variance, included the items "Ability to assess my level of multicultural awareness," "Understanding of the impact of things such as culture, attitudes, values, beliefs, assumptions, biases, identity, heritage, and life experiences on my work," "Ability to deconstruct assumptions and core beliefs about different cultures," and "Ability to expand my cultural skills and knowledge, especially related to specific cultural issues on my campus." The researcher named this factor Multicultural Competence. This factor's Cronbach's alpha ($\alpha = .88$) confirmed the reliability among these items. As a result of this process, the researcher was able to substitute the combination of the four competency items loading in the factor for a new factor variable (i.e., Multicultural Competence) in subsequent analyses.

Ethics

The researcher examined whether any of the six competency items within the SCPC Ethics cluster could be represented by one or more factors. Via the first iteration of analysis, one individual competency item was removed due to its failure to meet the condition regarding complex structure (see Appendix U).

The researcher reviewed the assumptions for the second iteration. First, eight of the correlations between items were at least .30 (see Table 57 in Appendix V). Second, the Bartlett test of sphericity was statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 428.73$, $df = 10$, $p < .01$). Third, the KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy was .74, higher than the suggested .50, for the overall set of items. Finally, the measure of sampling adequacy was greater than .50 for all individual items (see Table 58 in Appendix V). Therefore, all assumptions were met, indicating appropriate use of PCA.

The researcher then verified that the derived factor model met the aforementioned conditions. First, communalities of the five remaining items were at least .50, indicating that at least 50% of each item's variance was explained in the factor solution (see Table 59 in Appendix V). Second, no item had a complex structure (see Table 60 in Appendix V). Finally, as can be seen in Table 60 in Appendix V, more than one item loaded in each of the factors.

With these conditions met in the second iteration, two factors were extracted as per agreement among the Kaiser criterion (two eigenvalues greater than 1.0; see Table 61 in Appendix V), percentage of variance criterion (77.7% with two factors; see Table 61 in Appendix V), and scree test (two factors prior to leveling; see Figure 6 in Appendix V). Therefore, the information in the remaining five competency items could be represented by two factors. Factor 1, which explained 55.7% of the total variance, included three items: "Understanding of the ethical statements of ACPA and NASPA," "Understanding of the ethical statements of other professional associations relevant to my work (e.g., NACA, ACUHO-I, NODA, SACSA, AACC)," and "Knowledge of the major ethical principles that serve as the foundation of these professional associations' ethical statements." The researcher named this factor Knowledge of Ethics. This factor's Cronbach's alpha ($\alpha = .86$) confirmed the reliability among these items. Factor 2, which explained 22.0% of the total variance, included two items: "Ability to recognize ethical issues in the course of my job" and "Ability to use institutional resources (e.g., human resources, supervisor, institutional policies/procedures) to resolve ethical issues." The researcher named this factor Ethical Practice. This factor's Cronbach's alpha ($\alpha = .69$) confirmed the reliability among these items. Together, these two factors explained 77.7%

of the total variance in the items included within them. As a result of this process, the researcher was able to substitute the combination of the respective competency items loading in each factor for new factor variables (i.e., Knowledge of Ethics and Ethical Practice) in subsequent analyses.

Leadership and Management/Administration

As mentioned previously, the SCPC Leadership and Management/Administration cluster is further divided into four "subcompetency" areas, together consisting of a total of 27 competency items. The researcher ran a PCA on the cluster as a whole (i.e., 27 competency items), as well as on the four subcompetency areas individually, to see if there was a difference in the outcome, and if so, to determine which approach would best represent factors extracted within the cluster.

A number of issues contributed to the final decision. First, reliability analyses favored neither approach (i.e., Cronbach's alphas for the factors in both approaches showed no considerable difference). Second, substantive interpretations favored neither approach (i.e., factor interpretation seemed no more difficult for one approach over the other). Third, the researcher reviewed the number of factors extracted and number of competency items removed from the analyses for both approaches. Analysis on the cluster as a whole yielded five factors with 17 competency items loading on those factors, meaning 10 items were removed during the process. Analyses on each of the subcompetency areas separately yielded a total of seven factors (two in the first area, two in the second area, two in the third area, and one in the fourth area) with 23 total competency items loading on those factors, meaning 4 items were removed during the

process. The latter approach resulted in six fewer competency items being removed, meaning that more items were included within extracted factors. Previously mentioned issues being similar for both approaches, the researcher chose to utilize the results of PCA on each of the four subcompetency areas to represent factors for the Leadership and Management/Administration cluster.

Resource Management

The researcher examined whether any of the five competency items within the Resource Management subcompetency area could be represented by one or more factors. The researcher reviewed the assumptions for the first iteration. First, five of the correlations between items were at least .30 (see Table 62 in Appendix V). Second, the Bartlett test of sphericity was statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 234.16$, $df = 10$, $p < .01$). Third, the KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy was .71, higher than the suggested .50, for the overall set of items. Finally, the measure of sampling adequacy was greater than .50 for all individual items (see Table 63 in Appendix V). Therefore, all assumptions were met, indicating appropriate use of PCA.

The researcher then verified that the derived factor model met the aforementioned conditions. First, communalities of the five original items were at least .50, indicating that at least 50% of each item's variance was explained in the factor solution (see Table 64 in Appendix V). Second, no item had a complex structure (see Table 65 in Appendix V). Finally, as can be seen in Table 65 in Appendix V, more than one item loaded in each of the factors.

With these conditions met in the first iteration, two factors were extracted as per agreement among the Kaiser criterion (two eigenvalues greater than 1.0; see Table 66 in Appendix V), percentage of variance criterion (68.0% with two factors; see Table 66 in Appendix V), and scree test (two factors prior to leveling; see Figure 7 in Appendix V). Therefore, the information in the five original competency items could be represented by two factors. Factor 1, which explained 47.4% of the total variance, included three items: "Ability to utilize facilities management procedures to operate a facility," "Ability to utilize facilities management procedures to host an event/program in a facility," and "Knowledge of basic techniques for budget management/monitoring." The researcher named this factor Operational Management. This factor's Cronbach's alpha ($\alpha = .73$) confirmed the reliability among these items. Factor 2, which explained 20.5% of the total variance, included two items: "Ability to use technology to maximize efficiency and effectiveness of my work" and "Understanding of environmentally friendly (i.e., "green") methods to complete my work." The researcher named this factor Efficient and Sustainable Use of Resources. This factor's Cronbach's alpha ($\alpha = .56$), since lower than generally accepted limits, warrants some level of caution in further analyses. Together, these two factors explained 68.0% of the total variance in the items included within them. As a result of this process, the researcher was able to substitute the combination of the respective competency items loading in each factor for new factor variables (i.e., Operational Management and Efficient and Sustainable Use of Resources) in subsequent analyses.

Human Resources

The researcher examined whether any of the seven competency items within the Human Resources subcompetency area could be represented by one or more factors. Via the first iteration of analysis, one individual competency item was removed due to its failure to meet the condition regarding complex structure (see Appendix U).

The researcher reviewed the assumptions for the second iteration. First, all of the correlations between items were at least .30 (see Table 67 in Appendix V). Second, the Bartlett test of sphericity was statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 679.63$, $df = 15$, $p < .01$). Third, the KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy was .77, higher than the suggested .50, for the overall set of items. Finally, the measure of sampling adequacy was greater than .50 for all individual items (see Table 68 in Appendix V). Therefore, all assumptions were met, indicating appropriate use of PCA.

The researcher then verified that the derived factor model met the aforementioned conditions. First, communalities of the six remaining items were at least .50, indicating that at least 50% of each item's variance was explained in the factor solution (see Table 69 in Appendix V). Second, no item had a complex structure (see Table 70 in Appendix V). Finally, as can be seen in Table 70 in Appendix V, more than one item loaded in each of the factors.

With these conditions met in the second iteration, two factors were extracted as per agreement among the Kaiser criterion (two eigenvalues greater than 1.0; see Table 71 in Appendix V), percentage of variance criterion (76.4% with two factors; see Table 71 in Appendix V), and scree test (two factors prior to leveling; see Figure 8 in Appendix V). Therefore, the information in the remaining six competency items could be represented

by two factors. Factor 1, which explained 58.8% of the total variance, included four items: "Understanding of the basic principles that underlie conflict in organizations and student life," "Understanding of how to facilitate conflict resolution," "Knowledge of the fundamentals of teamwork and teambuilding," and "Ability to use basic motivational techniques with others (including students and staff)." The researcher named this factor Managing Interpersonal Relations. This factor's Cronbach's alpha ($\alpha = .85$) confirmed the reliability among these items. Factor 2, which explained 17.6% of the total variance, included two items: "Understanding of appropriate hiring techniques" and "Knowledge of my institution's hiring policies, procedures, and processes." The researcher named this factor Hiring Practices. This factor's Cronbach's alpha ($\alpha = .87$) confirmed the reliability among these items. Together, these two factors explained 76.4% of the total variance in the items included within them. As a result of this process, the researcher was able to substitute the combination of the respective competency items loading in each factor for new factor variables (i.e., Managing Interpersonal Relations and Hiring Practices) in subsequent analyses.

Organizational Development

The researcher examined whether any of the 10 competency items within the Organizational Development subcompetency area could be represented by one or more factors. Via the first iteration of analysis, two individual competency items were removed due to their failure to meet the condition regarding complex structure (see Appendix U).

The researcher reviewed the assumptions for the second iteration. First, 27 of the correlations between items were at least .30 (see Table 72 in Appendix V). Second, the

Bartlett test of sphericity was statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 858.77$, $df = 28$, $p < .01$). Third, the KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy was .88, higher than the suggested .50, for the overall set of items. Finally, the measure of sampling adequacy was greater than .50 for all individual items (see Table 73 in Appendix V). Therefore, all assumptions were met, indicating appropriate use of PCA.

The researcher then verified that the derived factor model met the aforementioned conditions. First, communalities of the eight remaining items were at least .50, indicating that at least 50% of each item's variance was explained in the factor solution (see Table 74 in Appendix V). Second, no item had a complex structure (see Table 75 in Appendix V). Finally, as can be seen in Table 75 in Appendix V, more than one item loaded in each of the factors.

With these conditions met in the second iteration, two factors were extracted as per agreement among the Kaiser criterion (two eigenvalues greater than 1.0; see Table 76 in Appendix V), percentage of variance criterion (70.0% with two factors; see Table 76 in Appendix V), and scree test (two factors prior to leveling; see Figure 9 in Appendix V). Therefore, the information in the remaining eight competency items could be represented by two factors. Factor 1, which explained 57.0% of the total variance, included five items: "Understanding of my institution's cultural landscape (i.e., culture), including traditions and customs," "Understanding of the organizational structure (i.e., hierarchy) of my institution," "Understanding of how my institution is governed (i.e., institutional governance)," "Understanding of the political landscape (i.e., politics) of my organization/institution, including factors (e.g., policies, hierarchy, goals, resource allocation processes) that influence others to act," and "Ability to implement change in

my organization (i.e., knowing the process to get a policy approved, understanding the role of campus decision-makers in the change process, etc.)." The researcher named this factor Understanding of Organizational Environment. This factor's Cronbach's alpha (α = .87) confirmed the reliability among these items. Factor 2, which explained 13.0% of the total variance, included three items: "Knowledge of the process necessary for identifying organizational goals," "Ability to organize and plan my work tasks within the context of institutional priorities," and "Ability to organize and plan my work tasks within the context of my individual performance objectives/goals." The researcher named this factor Creating and Meeting Work Objectives. This factor's Cronbach's alpha (α = .81) confirmed the reliability among these items. Together, these two factors explained 70.0% of the total variance in the items included within them. As a result of this process, the researcher was able to substitute the combination of the respective competency items loading in each factor for new factor variables (i.e., Understanding of Organizational Environment and Creating and Meeting Work Objectives) in subsequent analyses.

Social Responsibility/Civic Engagement

The researcher examined whether any of the five competency items within the Social Responsibility/Civic Engagement subcompetency area could be represented by one or more factors. Via the first iteration of analysis, one individual competency item was removed due to its failure to meet the condition regarding communality (see Appendix U).

The researcher reviewed the assumptions for the second iteration. First, all of the correlations between items were at least .30 (see Table 77 in Appendix V). Second, the

Bartlett test of sphericity was statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 351.60$, $df = 6$, $p < .01$). Third, the KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy was .68, higher than the suggested .50, for the overall set of items. Finally, the measure of sampling adequacy was greater than .50 for all individual items (see Table 78 in Appendix V). Therefore, all assumptions were met, indicating appropriate use of PCA.

The researcher then verified that the derived factor model met the aforementioned conditions. First, communalities of the four remaining items were at least .50, indicating that at least 50% of each item's variance was explained in the factor solution (see Table 79 in Appendix V). Second, no item had a complex structure (see Table 80 in Appendix V). Finally, as can be seen in Table 80 in Appendix V, more than one item loaded in the factor.

With these conditions met in the second iteration, one factor was extracted as per agreement among the Kaiser criterion (one eigenvalue greater than 1.0; see Table 81 in Appendix V) and percentage of variance criterion (63.6% with one factor; see Table 81 in Appendix V). Therefore, the information in the remaining four competency items could be represented by one factor. This factor, which explained 63.6% of the total variance, included the items "Knowledge of major public policy issues (e.g., national security, immigration, environmental protection, health care) and decisions at the national, state, and local levels," "Knowledge of higher education issues (e.g., funding, student rights) at the national, state, and local levels," "Belief in contributing to the well-being of communities (campus, local, professional, state, and/or national), even outside of my job description," and "Belief in the capacity of ordinary people to come together and take action to transform their communities." The researcher named this factor Community

Awareness and Engagement. This factor's Cronbach's alpha ($\alpha = .81$) confirmed the reliability among these items. As a result of this process, the researcher was able to substitute the combination of the four competency items loading in the factor for a new factor variable (i.e., Community Awareness and Engagement) in subsequent analyses.

Legal Foundations

The researcher examined whether any of the seven competency items within the SCPC Legal Foundations cluster could be represented by one or more factors. Via the first iteration of analysis, one individual competency item was removed due to its failure to meet the condition regarding communality (see Appendix U).

The researcher reviewed the assumptions for the second iteration. First, all of the correlations between items were at least .30 (see Table 82 in Appendix V). Second, the Bartlett test of sphericity was statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 735.85$, $df = 15$, $p < .01$). Third, the KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy was .83, higher than the suggested .50, for the overall set of items. Finally, the measure of sampling adequacy was greater than .50 for all individual items (see Table 83 in Appendix V). Therefore, all assumptions were met, indicating appropriate use of PCA.

The researcher then verified that the derived factor model met the aforementioned conditions. First, communalities of the six remaining items were at least .50, indicating that at least 50% of each item's variance was explained in the factor solution (see Table 84 in Appendix V). Second, no item had a complex structure (see Table 85 in Appendix V). Finally, as can be seen in Table 85 in Appendix V, more than one item loaded in the factor.

With these conditions met in the second iteration, one factor was extracted as per agreement among the Kaiser criterion (one eigenvalue greater than 1.0; see Table 86 in Appendix V), percentage of variance criterion (63.5% with one factor; see Table 86 in Appendix V), and scree test (one factor prior to leveling; see Figure 10 in Appendix V). Therefore, the information in the remaining six competency items could be represented by one factor. This factor, which explained 63.5% of the total variance, included the items "Understanding of how the US Constitution influences the rights of students, faculty, and staff at public institutions," "Knowledge of landmark civil rights, desegregation, and affirmative action case law that affects American higher education," "Understanding of what torts and negligence are and how they affect professional practice," "Understanding of contract law and how it affects professional practice," "Knowledge of when to seek advice from campus legal counsel," and "Ability to consult with campus legal counsel." The researcher named this factor Knowledge of Legal Concepts and Their Application. This factor's Cronbach's alpha ($\alpha = .89$) confirmed the reliability among these items. As a result of this process, the researcher was able to substitute the combination of the six competency items loading in the factor for a new factor variable (i.e., Knowledge of Legal Concepts and Their Application) in subsequent analyses.

Assessment, Evaluation, and Research

The researcher examined whether any of the nine competency items within the SCPC Assessment, Evaluation, and Research cluster could be represented by one or more factors. Via the first two iterations of analysis, three individual competency items were

removed due to their failure to meet the condition regarding complex structure (see Appendix U).

The researcher reviewed the assumptions for the third iteration. First, all of the correlations between items were at least .30 (see Table 87 in Appendix V). Second, the Bartlett test of sphericity was statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 934.32$, $df = 15$, $p < .01$). Third, the KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy was .82, higher than the suggested .50, for the overall set of items. Finally, the measure of sampling adequacy was greater than .50 for all individual items (see Table 88 in Appendix V). Therefore, all assumptions were met, indicating appropriate use of PCA.

The researcher then verified that the derived factor model met the aforementioned conditions. First, communalities of the six remaining items were at least .50, indicating that at least 50% of each item's variance was explained in the factor solution (see Table 89 in Appendix V). Second, no item had a complex structure (see Table 90 in Appendix V). Finally, as can be seen in Table 90 in Appendix V, more than one item loaded in the factor.

With these conditions met in the third iteration, one factor was extracted as per agreement between the Kaiser criterion (one eigenvalue greater than 1.0; see Table 91 in Appendix V) and percentage of variance criterion (66.2% with one factor; see Table 91 in Appendix V). Therefore, the information in the remaining six competency items could be represented by one factor. This factor, which explained 66.2% of the total variance, included the items "Ability to use professional literature to gain a better understanding of the effectiveness of programs and other initiatives," "Ability to assess the quality of a study that uses qualitative methods," "Ability to assess whether or how the findings of a

qualitative study transfer to my current work setting," "Ability to assess the quality of a study that uses quantitative methods, including validity and reliability," "Ability to conduct program evaluations," and "Ability to facilitate data collection for assessment/evaluation." The researcher named this factor Research, Assessment, and Evaluation. This factor's Cronbach's alpha ($\alpha = .90$) confirmed the reliability among these items. As a result of this process, the researcher was able to substitute the combination of the six competency items loading in the factor for a new factor variable (i.e., Research, Assessment, and Evaluation) in subsequent analyses.

Teaching

The researcher examined whether any of the five competency items within the SCPC Teaching cluster could be represented by one or more factors. The researcher reviewed the assumptions for the first iteration. First, all of the correlations between items were at least .30 (see Table 92 in Appendix V). Second, the Bartlett test of sphericity was statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 960.90$, $df = 10$, $p < .01$). Third, the KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy was .84, higher than the suggested .50, for the overall set of items. Finally, the measure of sampling adequacy was greater than .50 for all individual items (see Table 93 in Appendix V). Therefore, all assumptions were met, indicating appropriate use of PCA.

The researcher then verified that the derived factor model met the aforementioned conditions. First, communalities of the five original items were at least .50, indicating that at least 50% of each item's variance was explained in the factor solution (see Table 94 in Appendix V). Second, no item had a complex structure (see Table 95 in Appendix

V). Finally, as can be seen in Table 95 in Appendix V, more than one item loaded in the factor.

With these conditions met in the first iteration, one factor was extracted as per agreement among the Kaiser criterion (one eigenvalue greater than 1.0; see Table 96 in Appendix V), percentage of variance criterion (76.9% with one factor; see Table 96 in Appendix V), and scree test (one factor prior to leveling; see Figure 11 in Appendix V). Therefore, the information in the five original competency items could be represented by one factor. This factor, which explained 76.9% of the total variance, included the items "Ability to incorporate various learning theories/models into daily practice," "Ability to construct learning outcomes for a program/initiative," "Ability to shape the environment to ensure that learning outcomes are met," "Ability to assess teaching/training effectiveness and if learning has occurred," "Ability to incorporate the results of teaching, training, and learning assessment into my work." The researcher named this factor Teaching/Training and Enabling Learning. This factor's Cronbach's alpha ($\alpha = .92$) confirmed the reliability among these items. As a result of this process, the researcher was able to substitute the combination of the five competency items loading in the factor for a new factor variable (i.e., Teaching/Training and Enabling Learning) in subsequent analyses.

Demographic Differences

As the researcher collected demographic data on participants, further analyses regarding the importance of competencies were completed. Specifically, as stated in

chapter 3, the researcher ran ANOVAs to determine if there were mean differences between groups within an independent (i.e., demographic) variable.

As stated previously, 16 factor variables were extracted (accounting for 60 individual competency items) during factor analyses, with 15 individual competency items having been removed. As the factor variables did not represent competency items that were any more important than the removed individual items, ANOVAs were performed on both the factor variables and the removed items. The outcome for each demographic variable, separated by factor variable and removed individual item, is presented in the following sections. For a summary of the results of all ANOVAs run for this Research Question, see Tables 97 to 110 in Appendix W.

Years in Current Position

Factor Variables

Of the 16 factor variables derived from factor analyses, only 1, Knowledge of Ethics, indicated a statistically significant mean difference, $F(4, 219) = 2.64$, $p < .05$, in the degree of importance based on years served in the respondent's current full-time position (see Table 20). Post hoc analysis using the Bonferroni test indicated that the only statistically significant ($p < .05$) mean difference in groups occurred between respondents who had between 0 and 1 years of experience in their position ($M = 3.03$, $SD = 1.05$) and those who had between 1 and 2 years of experience in their position ($M = 2.55$, $SD = 0.98$). Due to its likely connection to years of experience in the *field* (71% of those with 0 to 1 years of experience in their position also had 0 to 1 years of experience in the field, meaning this was their first position), one could foresee that the importance of this

competency would be lower after the first year in a position. Perhaps this could be attributed to practitioners in the first year of working in their positions (which most of the time also meant that they were in their first year in the field), having recently completed a student affairs graduate preparation program in which they learned the foundation behind professional ethics, believing it to be more important than those who have progressed through years in their position. There does appear to be an exception, however. Of the five groups, those with between 4 and 5 years of experience in their position ($M = 3.19$, $SD = 1.12$) rated Knowledge of Ethics the highest. Perhaps as practitioners progress through the years in their positions, they are afforded more opportunities and experiences which could elicit ethical dilemmas and/or they are considering a promotion to a mid-level position, thereby necessitating a renewed understanding of ethical foundations of the field. Regardless, this specific mean should be scrutinized because not only was the standard deviation relatively high, but there were only nine respondents in this group.

Table 20 ANOVA Results for Factor Variables Based on Years in Current Position

Factor variable	0-1 *M(SD)*	1-2 *M(SD)*	2-3 *M(SD)*	3-4 *M(SD)*	4-5 *M(SD)*	*dfb*	*dfw*	*F*
Advising and developing students	4.29(0.66)	4.27(0.57)	4.22(0.52)	4.16(0.53)	4.44(0.61)	4	219	0.44
Communication skills	4.34(0.72)	4.42(0.52)	4.46(0.49)	4.38(0.62)	4.39(0.65)	4	219	0.33
Knowledge of student development theory	3.62(0.74)	3.47(0.80)	3.42(0.67)	3.50(0.68)	3.58(0.70)	4	219	0.56
Multicultural competence	4.15(0.78)	4.02(0.72)	4.01(0.75)	3.56(0.83)	4.00(0.73)	4	219	1.96
Knowledge of ethics	3.03_a(1.05)	2.55_a(0.98)	2.78(0.92)	2.69(0.91)	3.19(1.12)	4	219	2.64*
Ethical practice	3.98(0.82)	4.00(0.86)	3.86(0.81)	3.72(0.86)	4.11(0.70)	4	219	0.62
Operational management	3.16(1.05)	3.55(0.97)	3.47(0.87)	3.25(0.84)	3.33(1.26)	4	219	1.68
Efficient and sustainable use of resources	3.73(0.85)	3.66(0.84)	3.71(0.71)	3.47(0.88)	3.50(1.22)	4	219	0.45
Managing interpersonal relations	4.01(0.83)	4.10(0.85)	4.11(0.67)	4.25(0.66)	4.22(0.51)	4	219	0.41
Hiring practices	3.06(1.24)	3.32(1.17)[b]	3.20(1.05)	3.75(0.98)	3.00(0.83)	4	218	1.41
Understanding of organizational environment	3.78(0.88)	3.78(0.84)[b]	4.00(0.65)	3.52(1.00)	3.78(0.85)	4	218	1.11
Creating and meeting work objectives	3.69(0.86)	3.64(0.87)[b]	3.68(0.72)	3.41(0.87)	3.48(1.16)	4	218	0.46
Community awareness and engagement	3.49(0.85)	3.35(0.92)[b]	3.52(0.73)	2.95(0.92)	3.39(1.04)	4	218	1.51
Knowledge of legal concepts and their application	2.70(0.94)	2.84(1.06)[b]	2.64(0.92)	2.60(0.88)	3.33(0.90)	4	218	1.23
Research, assessment, and evaluation	3.62(0.99)	3.45(0.85)[b]	3.26(0.92)	2.91(0.85)	3.55(0.97)	4	218	2.39
Teaching/training and enabling learning	3.63(1.08)	3.47(1.01)[b]	3.53(0.84)	3.79(0.87)	4.00(0.70)	4	218	0.92

Note. With significant *F* statistic, means in the same row that share subscripts indicated a significant difference ($p < .05$) via post hoc test. Unless otherwise indicated, $n = 62$ for 0-1 Years, $n = 95$ for 1-2 Years, $n = 42$ for 2-3 Years, $n = 16$ for 3-4 Years, and $n = 9$ for 4-5 Years.
[b]$n = 94$.
*$p < .05$.

Removed Competency Items

Of the 15 competency items removed from factor analyses, only 1, "Knowledge of major policy issues and decisions on my campus," indicated a statistically significant

mean difference, $F(4, 218) = 3.16$, $p < .05$, in the degree of importance based on years served in the respondent's current full-time position (see Table 21). Post hoc analysis using the Bonferroni test indicated that the only statistically significant ($p < .05$) mean difference in groups occurred between respondents who had between 1 and 2 years of experience in their position ($M = 4.09$, $SD = 0.91$) and those who had between 3 and 4 years of experience in their position ($M = 3.25$, $SD = 0.93$). There was no trend in responses as years in the position increased and no explanation for why just these two groups produced mean differences, except perhaps that there were 94 respondents in the former group, compared to only 16 in the latter. The researcher thought that there would have been an overall increase in the importance of this item as years in the position increased because it would seem that a practitioner would find this competency item more important as he or she gained experience in the position, due to expanded responsibilities and/or future promotional endeavors.

Table 21 ANOVA Results for Removed Competency Items Based on Years in Current Position

Abridged competency item	0-1 *M(SD)*	1-2 *M(SD)*	2-3 *M(SD)*	3-4 *M(SD)*	4-5 *M(SD)*	*dfb*	*dfw*	*F*
Establish rapport[3]	4.76(0.50)	4.79(0.46)	4.74(0.45)	4.56(0.63)	5.00(0.00)	4	219	1.38
Student multiple issues[4]	4.34(0.85)	4.45(0.71)	4.43(0.67)	4.25(0.78)	4.56(0.73)	4	219	0.49
Challenge colleagues[9]	3.38(1.04)[b]	3.61(0.92)[c]	3.50(0.85)[d]	3.56(0.96)	3.78(1.30)	4	215	0.70
Encourage others[10]	4.24(0.69)	4.26(0.78)[e]	4.14(0.68)	4.19(0.83)	4.78(0.44)	4	217	1.43
Refer to resources[11]	4.10(1.00)	4.22(0.91)	4.26(0.80)	4.13(0.72)	4.56(0.73)	4	219	0.64
Facilitate dialogue[21]	3.95(1.11)	3.96(1.00)	3.86(0.90)	3.67(1.18)[f]	3.89(1.05)	4	218	0.32
Act in accordance[25]	3.98(0.95)	3.71(1.13)	3.76(0.88)	3.50(0.82)	4.00(1.00)	4	219	1.17
Supervision techniques[37]	3.90(1.29)	4.14(1.20)[c]	4.26(0.91)	4.47(0.83)[f]	3.89(1.36)	4	217	1.12
Organizational improvement[48]	3.63(1.01)	3.46(1.01)[e]	3.74(0.80)	3.56(0.96)	3.56(1.13)	4	217	0.65
Leadership styles[49]	3.57(1.18)[b]	3.51(1.17)[e]	3.74(0.96)	3.75(1.07)	3.89(0.93)	4	216	0.56
Policy issues on campus[52]	3.79(0.94)	4.09_a(0.91)[c]	3.86(0.93)	3.25_a(0.93)	3.67(1.32)	4	218	3.16*
Differences public/private[55]	3.18(1.34)	3.05(1.29)[c]	2.93(1.31)	3.00(0.97)	2.89(1.27)	4	218	0.29
Institutional policy[66]	3.39(1.27)	3.18(1.21)[c]	3.17(1.15)	2.81(0.91)	3.33(0.87)	4	218	0.85
Interpret data[69]	3.68(1.18)	3.48(1.20)[e]	3.39(1.16)[g]	3.31(1.14)	3.89(1.05)	4	216	0.76
Use results[70]	3.85(1.13)	3.58(1.15)[e]	3.43(1.06)	3.31(1.08)	3.89(1.05)	4	217	1.46

Note. With significant *F* statistic, means in the same row that share subscripts indicated a significant difference ($p < .05$) via post hoc test. Unless otherwise indicated, $n = 62$ for 0-1 Years, $n = 95$ for 1-2 Years, $n = 42$ for 2-3 Years, $n = 16$ for 3-4 Years, and $n = 9$ for 4-5 Years. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.

[b]$n = 61$. [c]$n = 94$. [d]$n = 40$. [e]$n = 93$. [f]$n = 15$. [g]$n = 41$.

*$p < .05$.

Years of Experience in Field

Factor Variables

Of the 16 factor variables derived from factor analyses, none indicated a statistically significant mean difference in the degree of importance based on years of respondent full-time experience in the field of student affairs (see Table 22). It appears that respondents did not feel differently about the degree of importance of any of the factor variables, despite the fact that they may have served a different number of years in the field. For an entry-level practitioner, then, the importance of the 16 factor variables did not differ significantly regardless of the number of years a respondent had worked in the field.

Removed Competency Items

Of the 15 competency items removed from factor analyses, none indicated a statistically significant mean difference in the degree of importance based on years of respondent full-time experience in the field of student affairs (see Table 23). It seems that respondents did not feel differently about the degree of importance of any of the removed competency items, despite the fact that they may have served a different number of years in the field. For an entry-level practitioner, then, the importance of the 15 removed items did not differ significantly regardless of the number of years a respondent had worked in the field.

Table 22 ANOVA Results for Factor Variables Based on Years in Field

Factor variable	0-1 *M(SD)*	1-2 *M(SD)*	2-3 *M(SD)*	3-4 *M(SD)*	4-5 *M(SD)*	*dfb*	*dfw*	*F*
Advising and developing students	4.24(0.69)	4.29(0.57)	4.34(0.48)	4.07(0.58)	4.25(0.65)	4	219	1.01
Communication skills	4.28(0.73)	4.41(0.58)	4.52(0.46)	4.33(0.55)	4.38(0.63)	4	219	1.12
Knowledge of student development theory	3.67(0.72)	3.41(0.77)	3.50(0.72)	3.50(0.80)	3.55(0.67)	4	219	0.88
Multicultural competence	4.10(0.85)	4.03(0.68)	4.08(0.70)	3.78(0.93)	3.93(0.72)	4	219	0.98
Knowledge of ethics	2.98(1.05)	2.59(0.96)	2.75(0.98)	2.73(1.03)	3.10(1.04)	4	219	1.55
Ethical practice	3.92(0.96)	4.00(0.75)	3.86(0.92)	3.98(0.75)	4.09(0.69)	4	219	0.39
Operational management	3.42(1.06)	3.38(1.02)	3.49(0.94)	3.31(0.86)	3.24(1.01)	4	219	0.31
Efficient and sustainable use of resources	3.85(0.87)	3.60(0.86)	3.75(0.70)	3.46(0.84)	3.56(1.00)	4	219	1.26
Managing interpersonal relations	4.06(0.88)	4.00(0.87)	4.13(0.74)	4.29(0.65)	4.18(0.45)	4	219	0.78
Hiring practices	3.13(1.19)	3.18(1.24)[a]	3.27(1.08)	3.57(1.21)	3.18(0.71)	4	218	0.75
Understanding of organizational environment	3.81(0.92)	3.78(0.85)[a]	3.86(0.78)	3.81(0.80)	3.69(0.83)	4	218	0.16
Creating and meeting work objectives	3.64(0.90)	3.66(0.87)[a]	3.66(0.83)	3.64(0.71)	3.45(0.96)	4	218	0.23
Community awareness and engagement	3.53(0.93)	3.36(0.83)[a]	3.37(0.84)	3.37(0.96)	3.29(0.97)	4	218	0.35
Knowledge of legal concepts and their application	2.84(0.98)	2.72(0.98)[a]	2.77(1.07)	2.51(0.90)	3.23(0.83)	4	218	1.49
Research, assessment, and evaluation	3.67(0.95)	3.47(0.86)[a]	3.29(0.90)	3.11(1.01)	3.54(0.91)	4	218	2.03
Teaching/training and enabling learning	3.64(1.09)	3.49(1.04)[a]	3.48(0.88)	3.68(1.02)	3.88(0.71)	4	218	0.80

Note. Unless otherwise indicated, $n = 44$ for 0-1 Years, $n = 77$ for 1-2 Years, $n = 59$ for 2-3 Years, $n = 27$ for 3-4 Years, and $n = 17$ for 4-5 Years.
[a]$n = 76$.

Table 23 ANOVA Results for Removed Competency Items Based on Years in Field

Abridged competency item	0-1 *M(SD)*	1-2 *M(SD)*	2-3 *M(SD)*	3-4 *M(SD)*	4-5 *M(SD)*	*dfb*	*dfw*	*F*
Establish rapport[3]	4.68(0.60)	4.82(0.42)	4.80(0.41)	4.59(0.50)	4.88(0.49)	4	219	1.81
Student multiple issues[4]	4.23(0.86)	4.44(0.79)	4.54(0.60)	4.22(0.75)	4.53(0.62)	4	219	1.72
Challenge colleagues[9]	3.40(1.05)[a]	3.52(0.91)	3.68(0.94)[b]	3.37(0.97)	3.65(1.00)	4	215	0.80
Encourage others[10]	4.27(0.73)	4.20(0.78)[c]	4.26(0.69)[d]	4.22(0.75)	4.41(0.71)	4	217	0.32
Refer to resources[11]	4.05(0.99)	4.18(1.00)	4.25(0.82)	4.30(0.72)	4.35(0.70)	4	219	0.58
Facilitate dialogue[21]	4.02(1.09)	3.86(1.01)	3.98(0.96)[d]	3.85(1.17)	3.76(0.90)	4	218	0.36
Act in accordance[25]	3.82(1.02)	3.83(1.07)	3.66(0.92)	3.70(1.14)	4.12(0.86)	4	219	0.77
Supervision techniques[37]	4.00(1.24)	4.05(1.31)[c]	4.29(0.88)[d]	4.15(1.20)	3.94(1.14)	4	217	0.60
Organizational improvement[48]	3.66(1.01)	3.46(1.04)[c]	3.62(0.91)[d]	3.70(0.82)	3.47(1.01)	4	217	0.54
Leadership styles[49]	3.56(1.20)[a]	3.49(1.22)[c]	3.66(1.06)	3.88(0.82)[e]	3.59(1.00)	4	216	0.68
Policy issues on campus[52]	3.68(1.07)	4.11(0.89)[c]	3.88(0.87)	3.78(0.97)	3.59(1.12)	4	218	2.02
Differences public/private[55]	3.20(1.39)	3.04(1.27)[c]	3.00(1.31)	2.96(1.19)	3.06(1.14)	4	218	0.21
Institutional policy[66]	3.45(1.23)	3.24(1.25)[c]	3.15(1.11)	2.81(1.15)	3.35(1.00)	4	218	1.33
Interpret data[69]	3.75(1.20)	3.55(1.15)[f]	3.34(1.21)[d]	3.30(1.20)	3.82(1.02)	4	216	1.28
Use results[70]	3.91(1.18)	3.65(1.08)[f]	3.39(1.13)	3.48(1.12)	3.76(1.03)	4	217	1.56

Note. Unless otherwise indicated, $n = 44$ for 0-1 Years, $n = 77$ for 1-2 Years, $n = 59$ for 2-3 Years, $n = 27$ for 3-4 Years, and $n = 17$ for 4-5 Years. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.
[a]n = 43. [b]n = 56. [c]$n = 76$. [d]$n = 58$. [e]$n = 26$. [f]$n = 75$.

Age

Factor Variables

Of the 16 factor variables, 4 indicated statistically significant mean differences in the degree of importance between age groups (see Table 24). First, Advising and Developing Students indicated a statistically significant mean difference, $F(3, 220) = 3.97$, $p < .01$, in the degree of importance based on age. Post hoc analysis using the Bonferroni test indicated that no *pairs* of means differed, meaning that perhaps some other combination of means provided for the significant *F* statistic. However, a trend did emerge. As age increased, the importance of this factor decreased slightly (although it was still considered minimally "important," even for the two highest age ranges studied). This was a bit surprising since, generally, entry-level practitioners, more so than mid- and upper-level practitioners, maintain a high level of contact with students and therefore would seemingly feel that skills related to working with students (i.e., assisting with decision-making, goal setting, and problem-solving) were "very important." That being said, perhaps these last two group means should be scrutinized due to the number of respondents in each (i.e., $n = 10$ for those 31-35 and $n = 3$ for 36-40).

Second, Efficient and Sustainable Use of Resources indicated a statistically significant mean difference, $F(3, 220) = 3.08$, $p < .05$, in the degree of importance based on age. Post hoc analysis using the Bonferroni test indicated that no *pairs* of means differed, meaning that perhaps some other combination of means provided for the significant *F* statistic. A general trend emerged. As age increased, the importance of the factor, which consisted of technology and environmentally-friendly competencies,

decreased slightly. This makes sense based on the notion that younger generations have been exposed to technology and environmental conscientiousness more than their "elder" practitioners, thus having a higher level of understanding of the importance of these competencies for their work. One exception to the trend is noteworthy. It is interesting that the 31-35 year age group indicated the highest degree of importance for this factor, although this age group had only 10 respondents and the statistics should therefore be scrutinized.

Third, Community Awareness and Engagement indicated a statistically significant mean difference, $F(3, 219) = 2.73$, $p < .05$, in the degree of importance based on age. Post hoc analysis using the Bonferroni test indicated that comparisons of two sets of groups had statistically significant ($p < .05$) mean differences. These differences occurred between respondents age 22-25 ($M = 3.44$, $SD = 0.87$) and those age 36-40 ($M = 2.00$, $SD = 0.00$) and then those respondents age 26-30 ($M = 3.38$, $SD = 0.86$) and those age 36-40. Again, there were only three respondents aged 36-40, so some scrutiny should be applied. However, a general trend emerged. As age increased, the importance of this factor decreased. While this is a bit discouraging, this could be a result of the younger respondents having more recently come out of graduate school, entering the field with a "I can change the world" type of attitude. Sadly, perhaps this attitude decreases over time, when one becomes more aware of the realities of making change, including the politics and bureaucracy of the institution. This decrease may also be attributed to the life circumstances of older practitioners. It is plausible that with age comes additional outside commitments (e.g., partner, family) which may alter the priorities in a practitioner's life due to time constraints.

Finally, Research, Assessment, and Evaluation indicated a statistically significant mean difference, $F(3, 219) = 2.82$, $p < .05$, in the degree of importance based on age. Post hoc analysis using the Bonferroni test indicated that no *pairs* of means differed, meaning that perhaps some other combination of means provided for the significant *F* statistic. An overall trend did emerge, though. As age increased, the importance of this factor decreased. Within entry-level positions, as practitioners aged (which likely related to increased years of experience), they did not believe that competencies related to research, assessment, and evaluation were as important as they did when they were younger (i.e., less experienced). This may again be a result of more recent departure from graduate school, having been taught about the importance of these functions for their positions and field as a whole. Perhaps as practitioners progress in age (and hence, in years on the job), they do not utilize these skills in their positions as much as they thought they would. It would be interesting to determine if this trend is perhaps reversed among mid-level and upper-level practitioners, who generally spend less time in direct contact with students and more time on the administration and management of student affairs programs.

Table 24 ANOVA Results for Factor Variables Based on Age

Factor variable	22-25 *M(SD)*	26-30 *M(SD)*	31-35 *M(SD)*	36-40 *M(SD)*	*dfb*	*dfw*	*F*
Advising and developing students	4.41(0.56)	4.20(0.60)	3.93(0.37)	3.83(0.14)	3	220	3.97**
Communication skills	4.48(0.54)	4.35(0.62)	4.50(0.41)	4.00(0.50)	3	220	1.47
Knowledge of student development theory	3.58(0.76)	3.46(0.74)	3.52(0.71)	3.07(0.81)	3	220	0.77
Multicultural competence	4.07(0.74)	4.02(0.76)	3.95(0.69)	3.00(1.00)	3	220	1.97
Knowledge of ethics	2.90(1.00)	2.65(1.00)	3.23(0.97)	1.89(0.38)	3	220	2.57
Ethical practice	3.99(0.79)	3.90(0.88)	4.35(0.58)	3.67(0.29)	3	220	1.14
Operational management	3.37(1.07)	3.44(0.93)	3.37(0.79)	2.56(1.58)	3	220	0.83
Efficient and sustainable use of resources	3.76(0.87)	3.60(0.80)	4.10(0.61)	2.67(1.04)	3	220	3.08*
Managing interpersonal relations	4.12(0.73)	4.08(0.84)	4.13(0.56)	3.83(1.04)	3	220	0.15
Hiring practices	3.23(1.16)[c]	3.25(1.17)	3.45(1.01)	2.67(0.76)	3	219	0.36
Understanding of organizational environment	3.78(0.75)[c]	3.82(0.89)	3.72(0.84)	3.80(1.04)	3	219	0.07
Creating and meeting work objectives	3.70(0.80)[c]	3.60(0.89)	3.58(0.93)	3.78(1.02)	3	219	0.24
Community awareness and engagement	3.44_{a}(0.87)[c]	3.38_{b}(0.86)	3.48(0.98)	$2.00_{a,b}$(0.00)	3	219	2.73*
Knowledge of legal concepts and their application	2.82(0.99)[c]	2.73(0.99)	2.95(1.06)	2.22(0.92)	3	219	0.56
Research, assessment, and evaluation	3.59(0.84)[c]	3.33(0.97)	3.57(0.77)	2.34(0.28)	3	219	2.82*
Teaching/training and enabling learning	3.64(0.94)[c]	3.54(1.02)	3.50(0.88)	3.47(1.50)	3	219	0.19

Note. With significant *F* statistic, means in the same row that share subscripts indicated a significant difference ($p < .05$) via post hoc test. Unless otherwise indicated, $n = 86$ for 22-25, $n = 125$ for 26-30, $n = 10$ for 31-35, and $n = 3$ for 36-40.
[c]$n = 85$.
*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$.

Removed Competency Items

Of the 15 competency items removed from factor analyses, none indicated a statistically significant mean difference in the degree of importance based on age (see Table 25). It appears that respondents did not feel differently about the degree of importance of any of the removed competency items, despite the fact that they may have been be different ages. For an entry-level practitioner, then, the importance of the 15 removed items did not differ significantly regardless of how old he or she might be. Since there were 10 or less respondents aged 31-35 and 3 or less aged 36-40, it should be noted that there may not have been enough members in either of these groups to indicate a variation in group means (i.e., there may not have been enough respondents to see if there were in fact significant differences between these groups and the other age groups). As such, interpretation of these data should be scrutinized.

Table 25 ANOVA Results for Removed Competency Items Based on Age

Abridged competency item	22-25 *M(SD)*	26-30 *M(SD)*	31-35 *M(SD)*	36-40 *M(SD)*	*dfb*	*dfw*	*F*
Establish rapport[3]	4.78(0.50)	4.75(0.47)	4.80(0.42)	4.67(0.58)	3	220	0.12
Student multiple issues[4]	4.47(0.76)	4.39(0.73)	4.30(0.82)	3.67(0.58)	3	220	1.25
Challenge colleagues[9]	3.52(0.95)[a]	3.52(0.98)[b]	3.80(0.92)	3.33(0.58)	3	216	0.32
Encourage others[10]	4.35(0.70)[a]	4.20(0.74)[c]	4.10(0.88)	3.67(0.58)	3	218	1.51
Refer to resources[11]	4.21(0.95)	4.22(0.84)	3.90(1.20)	4.00(1.00)	3	220	0.45
Facilitate dialogue[21]	3.98(1.04)	3.90(0.99)	4.00(0.87)[d]	2.33(1.53)	3	219	2.59
Act in accordance[25]	3.95(0.92)	3.66(1.05)	4.10(1.29)	3.33(0.58)	3	220	1.93
Supervision techniques[37]	4.07(1.27)[a]	4.16(1.10)	3.89(1.05)[d]	3.67(1.53)	3	218	0.36
Organizational improvement[48]	3.53(0.96)[a]	3.59(0.99)	3.50(0.85)	4.50(0.71)[e]	3	218	0.70
Leadership styles[49]	3.68(1.15)[f]	3.54(1.11)	3.67(0.71)[d]	3.67(1.53)	3	217	0.26
Policy issues on campus[52]	4.00(0.85)[a]	3.85(1.05)	3.60(0.70)	3.00(0.00)	3	219	1.62
Differences public/private[55]	3.25(1.23)[a]	2.92(1.29)	3.20(1.55)	2.67(1.16)	3	219	1.24
Institutional policy[66]	3.40(1.22)[a]	3.11(1.17)	3.30(0.95)	2.00(0.00)	3	219	2.11
Interpret data[69]	3.62(1.15)[a]	3.45(1.20)[g]	3.80(1.23)	3.00(1.00)	3	217	0.76
Use results[70]	3.74(1.11)[a]	3.51(1.14)[c]	4.00(1.05)	3.67(0.58)	3	218	1.13

Note. Unless otherwise indicated, $n = 86$ for 22-25, $n = 125$ for 26-30, $n = 10$ for 31-35, and $n = 3$ for 36-40. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.
[a]$n = 85$. [b]$n = 122$. [c]$n = 124$. [d]$n = 9$. [e]$n = 2$. [f]$n = 84$. [g]$n = 123$.

Gender

Factor Variables

Of the 16 factor variables, none indicated a statistically significant mean difference in the degree of importance based on gender (see Table 26). In this study, then,

respondents did not feel differently about the degree of importance of any of the factor variables, despite the fact that they may have varied by gender. For an entry-level practitioner, then, the importance of the 16 factor variables did not differ significantly regardless of whether the person identified as male or female.

Table 26 ANOVA Results for Factor Variables Based on Gender

Factor variable	Female *M(SD)*	Male *M(SD)*	*dfb*	*dfw*	*F*
Advising and developing students	4.24(0.62)	4.32(0.51)	1	222	0.90
Communication skills	4.44(0.54)	4.33(0.66)	1	222	1.69
Knowledge of student development theory	3.46(0.76)	3.61(0.72)	1	222	1.92
Multicultural competence	3.98(0.75)	4.10(0.77)	1	222	1.27
Knowledge of ethics	2.74(0.97)	2.81(1.08)	1	222	0.22
Ethical practice	3.94(0.84)	3.98(0.83)	1	222	0.13
Operational management	3.38(1.03)	3.43(0.89)	1	222	0.16
Efficient and sustainable use of resources	3.65(0.87)	3.72(0.76)	1	222	0.38
Managing interpersonal relations	4.05(0.82)	4.18(0.71)	1	222	1.39
Hiring practices	3.24(1.19)[a]	3.24(1.07)	1	221	0.00
Understanding of organizational environment	3.84(0.84)[a]	3.73(0.82)	1	221	0.85
Creating and meeting work objectives	3.64(0.90)[a]	3.63(0.75)	1	221	0.00
Community awareness and engagement	3.42(0.88)[a]	3.33(0.87)	1	221	0.51
Knowledge of legal concepts and their application	2.76(0.96)[a]	2.79(1.05)	1	221	0.03
Research, assessment, and evaluation	3.38(0.92)[a]	3.52(0.91)	1	221	1.07
Teaching/training and enabling learning	3.54(0.98)[a]	3.64(0.99)	1	221	0.57

Note. Unless otherwise indicated, $n = 151$ for Female and $n = 73$ for Male.
[a]$n = 150$.

Removed Competency Items

Of the 15 items removed from the factor analyses, 2 indicated statistically significant mean differences in the degree of importance between males and females (see Table 27). First, "Ability to establish rapport with others (including students and colleagues)" indicated a significant mean difference, $F(1, 222) = 5.47$, $p < .05$, between males ($M = 4.66$, $SD = 0.56$) and females ($M = 4.81$, $SD = 0.42$). This competency item, more so than others, refers to the quality of relationships and closeness with other people. Perhaps this difference in perception about the importance of this competency is reflective of a stereotypical female quality.

Second, "Ability to refer others to on- or off-campus resources (e.g., offices, outside agencies) when needed" indicated a statistically significant mean difference, $F(1, 222) = 4.78$, $p < .05$, between males ($M = 4.01$, $SD = 0.97$) and females ($M = 4.29$, $SD = 0.85$). This competency item, more so than others, refers to the ability to seek or help others get assistance. Perhaps this difference in perception about the importance of this competency is reflective of another stereotypical female quality.

Table 27 ANOVA Results for Removed Competency Items Based on Gender

Abridged competency item	Female *M(SD)*	Male *M(SD)*	*dfb*	*dfw*	*F*
Establish rapport[3]	4.81(0.42)	4.66(0.56)	1	222	5.47*
Student multiple issues[4]	4.44(0.73)	4.33(0.78)	1	222	1.17
Challenge colleagues[9]	3.52(0.92)[a]	3.54(1.05)[b]	1	218	0.03
Encourage others[10]	4.26(0.76)[c]	4.22(0.69)	1	220	0.16
Refer to resources[11]	4.29(0.85)	4.01(0.97)	1	222	4.78*
Facilitate dialogue[21]	3.87(1.06)	4.01(0.93)[d]	1	221	1.00
Act in accordance[25]	3.80(1.01)	3.77(1.02)	1	222	0.06
Supervision techniques[37]	4.04(1.25)[a]	4.25(0.96)[d]	1	220	1.59
Organizational improvement[48]	3.54(1.02)[c]	3.64(0.86)	1	220	0.59
Leadership styles[49]	3.63(1.19)[a]	3.54(0.94)[e]	1	219	0.37
Policy issues on campus[52]	3.85(0.99)[a]	3.96(0.90)	1	221	0.67
Differences public/private[55]	3.05(1.29)[a]	3.07(1.26)	1	221	0.01
Institutional policy[66]	3.19(1.18)[a]	3.27(1.21)	1	221	0.27
Interpret data[69]	3.48(1.19)[c]	3.62(1.14)[d]	1	219	0.77
Use results[70]	3.60(1.13)[c]	3.66(1.11)	1	220	0.11

Note. With significant *F* statistic, means across each row indicated a significant difference due to presence of only two groups. Unless otherwise indicated, $n = 151$ for Female and $n = 73$ for Male. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.
[a]n = 150. [b]n = 70. [c]$n = 149$. [d]$n = 72$. [e]$n = 71$.
*$p < .05$.

Highest Educational Degree Earned

Factor Variables

As there was only one doctoral respondent, the researcher removed this case from the data set prior to analysis. Of the 16 factor variables derived from factor analyses,

none indicated a statistically significant mean difference in the degree of importance based on respondent highest educational degree earned (see Table 28). It seems that respondents did not feel differently about the degree of importance of any of the factor variables, despite highest degree earned (i.e., bachelor's or master's). For an entry-level practitioner, then, the importance of the 16 factor variables did not differ significantly regardless of whether he or she earned a bachelor's or master's degree. Since there were only 20 respondents with bachelor's degrees, it should be noted that there may not have been enough members in this group to indicate a variation in group means (i.e., there may not have been enough respondents to see if there were in fact significant differences between those with bachelor's and master's degrees). As such, interpretation of these data should be scrutinized.

Removed Competency Items

Of the 15 competency items removed from the factor analyses, only 1, "Ability to interpret and use results of assessment/evaluation/research," indicated a statistically significant mean difference, $F(1, 219) = 4.78$, $p < .05$, in the degree of importance between those with a bachelor's degree ($M = 3.10$, $SD = 1.29$) and those with a master's degree ($M = 3.67$, $SD = 1.10$; see Table 29). There is no explanation why this specific individual competency item, compared especially to others in the SCPC Assessment, Evaluation, and Research cluster, produced a significant difference. Perhaps this individual competency item indicates higher level application (i.e., the ability to not only *interpret*, but also to *use* results), deemed more important as a result of a higher level of

education (i.e., a master's degree, which likely includes at least one class related to conducting assessment and/or research).

Table 28 ANOVA Results for Factor Variables Based on Highest Educational Degree Earned

Factor variable	Bachelor's *M(SD)*	Master's *M(SD)*	*dfb*	*dfw*	*F*
Advising and developing students	4.39(0.65)	4.25(0.58)	1	221	0.96
Communication skills	4.58(0.37)	4.38(0.60)	1	221	1.94
Knowledge of student development theory	3.23(0.92)	3.54(0.72)	1	221	3.08
Multicultural competence	3.95(0.63)	4.03(0.77)	1	221	0.21
Knowledge of ethics	2.63(1.13)	2.78(0.99)	1	221	0.40
Ethical practice	4.00(0.81)	3.95(0.84)	1	221	0.08
Operational management	3.07(0.96)	3.44(0.97)	1	221	2.65
Efficient and sustainable use of resources	3.73(0.80)	3.67(0.84)	1	221	0.09
Managing interpersonal relations	4.14(0.78)	4.08(0.79)	1	221	0.09
Hiring practices	3.38(1.00)	3.23(1.17)[a]	1	220	0.30
Understanding of organizational environment	3.54(0.69)	3.82(0.84)[a]	1	220	2.14
Creating and meeting work objectives	3.66(0.86)	3.64(0.85)[a]	1	220	0.01
Community awareness and engagement	3.14(0.92)	3.42(0.87)[a]	1	220	1.98
Knowledge of legal concepts and their application	2.64(0.90)	2.79(1.00)[a]	1	220	0.38
Research, assessment, and evaluation	3.26(0.81)	3.45(0.93)[a]	1	220	0.75
Teaching/training and enabling learning	3.39(1.08)	3.58(0.97)[a]	1	220	0.70

Note. Unless otherwise indicated, $n = 20$ for Bachelor's degree and $n = 203$ for Master's degree.
[a]$n = 202$.

Table 29 ANOVA Results for Removed Competency Items Based on Highest Educational Degree Earned

Abridged competency item	Bachelor's *M(SD)*	Master's *M(SD)*	*dfb*	*dfw*	*F*
Establish rapport[3]	4.85(0.37)	4.76(0.48)	1	221	0.68
Student multiple issues[4]	4.70(0.47)	4.38(0.76)	1	221	3.34
Challenge colleagues[9]	3.75(0.97)	3.50(0.96)[a]	1	217	1.21
Encourage others[10]	4.42(0.77)[b]	4.23(0.73)[c]	1	219	1.14
Refer to resources[11]	4.40(0.68)	4.19(0.91)	1	221	1.03
Facilitate dialogue[21]	4.32(0.67)[b]	3.89(1.02)	1	220	3.13
Act in accordance[25]	3.70(1.17)	3.80(1.00)	1	221	0.19
Supervision techniques[37]	4.53(0.77)[b]	4.06(1.19)[c]	1	219	2.75
Organizational improvement[48]	3.40(0.88)	3.58(0.98)[d]	1	219	0.64
Leadership styles[49]	3.55(1.15)	3.60(1.11)[e]	1	218	0.04
Policy issues on campus[52]	3.85(0.88)	3.89(0.97)[c]	1	220	0.03
Differences public/private[55]	2.60(1.19)	3.10(1.28)[c]	1	220	2.84
Institutional policy[66]	2.80(1.01)	3.26(1.20)[c]	1	220	2.79
Interpret data[69]	3.21(1.23)[b]	3.55(1.17)[d]	1	218	1.46
Use results[70]	3.10(1.29)	3.67(1.10)[d]	1	219	4.78*

Note. With significant *F* statistic, means across each row indicated a significant difference due to presence of only two groups. Unless otherwise indicated, $n = 20$ for Bachelor's degree and $n = 203$ for Master's degree. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.
[a]n = 199. [b]$n = 19$. [c]$n = 202$. [d]$n = 201$. [e]$n = 200$.
*$p < .05$.

Degree in Student Affairs or Related Area

Factor Variables

Of the 16 factor variables, 2 indicated statistically significant mean differences in the degree of importance based on whether or not respondents earned a degree in a

student affairs, higher education, or related field (see Table 30). First, Knowledge of Student Development Theory indicated a statistically significant mean difference, $F(2, 221) = 3.77$, $p < .05$, in the degree of importance based on degree topic. Post hoc analysis using the Bonferroni test indicated that the only statistically significant ($p < .05$) mean difference in groups occurred between respondents who were in possession ($M = 3.55$, $SD = 0.70$) and not in possession ($M = 3.10$, $SD = 1.02$) of this type of degree. This was to be expected since these types of theories form the foundation of student affairs graduate preparation program curricula. Perhaps those respondents without this type of degree did not realize the importance of this factor because they were not trained in the concepts embedded in it.

Second, Community Awareness and Engagement indicated a statistically significant mean difference, $F(2, 220) = 3.25$, $p < .05$, in the degree of importance based on degree topic. Post hoc analysis using the Bonferroni test indicated that the only statistically significant ($p < .05$) mean difference in groups occurred between respondents who were in possession ($M = 3.44$, $SD = 0.85$) and not in possession ($M = 2.95$, $SD = 0.99$) of this type of degree. This factor, which includes competencies related to knowing public policy and higher education issues and contributing to the community, was found to be decidedly more important for respondents trained in student affairs or related areas. This is understandable due to the coverage of these topics in most student affairs graduate preparation program curricula. Another explanation is possible, however. Instead of believing that this factor's importance was a byproduct of student affairs graduate training, perhaps it could also be explained by respondent predisposition (i.e., those who

have received training in student affairs, desiring to enter this helping and human service field, were already likely to believe in the importance of this factor).

Removed Competency Items

Of the 15 competency items removed from factor analyses, none indicated a statistically significant mean difference in the degree of importance based on whether or not the respondent possessed a degree in a student affairs, higher education, or related area (see Table 31). It appears that respondents did not feel differently about the degree of importance of any of the removed competency items, despite the fact that they may or may not have possessed a student affairs or related degree. For an entry-level practitioner, then, the importance of the 15 removed items did not differ significantly regardless of whether he or she received graduate training in student affairs or a related area. Since there were only 22 respondents who did not possess a student affairs or related degree and 2 who did not care to respond, it should be noted that there may not have been enough members in these groups to indicate a variation in group means (i.e., there may not have been enough respondents to see if there were in fact significant differences between these groups and the group of respondents who did possess a student affairs or related degree). As such, interpretation of these data should be scrutinized.

Table 30 ANOVA Results for Factor Variables Based on Possession of Degree in Student Affairs or Related Area

Factor variable	Yes *M(SD)*	No *M(SD)*	Prefer not to respond *M(SD)*	*dfb*	*dfw*	*F*
Advising and developing students	4.27(0.57)	4.13(0.66)	4.75(0.35)	2	221	1.36
Communication skills	4.39(0.61)	4.43(0.36)	5.00(0.00)	2	221	1.10
Knowledge of student development theory	3.55_a(0.70)	3.10_a(1.02)	3.70(0.14)	2	221	3.77*
Multicultural competence	4.05(0.74)	3.82(0.95)	3.75(0.71)	2	221	1.02
Knowledge of ethics	2.78(1.00)	2.52(1.02)	4.00(0.00)	2	221	2.24
Ethical practice	3.93(0.83)	4.14(0.85)	4.50(0.71)	2	221	1.08
Operational management	3.43(0.99)	3.18(0.96)	2.67(0.47)	2	221	1.17
Efficient and sustainable use of resources	3.66(0.83)	3.66(0.88)	4.50(0.00)	2	221	1.00
Managing interpersonal relations	4.10(0.78)	4.07(0.83)	3.75(1.06)	2	221	0.21
Hiring practices	3.22(1.15)[b]	3.39(1.12)	4.00(1.41)	2	220	0.65
Understanding of organizational environment	3.81(0.85)[b]	3.78(0.72)	3.20(0.28)	2	220	0.54
Creating and meeting work objectives	3.64(0.86)[b]	3.69(0.85)	3.50(0.71)	2	220	0.07
Community awareness and engagement	3.44_a(0.85)[b]	2.95_a(0.99)	3.13(0.18)	2	220	3.25*
Knowledge of legal concepts and their application	2.81(0.99)[b]	2.37(0.88)	3.42(1.06)	2	220	2.42
Research, assessment, and evaluation	3.43(0.93)[b]	3.36(0.88)	3.58(0.82)	2	220	0.09
Teaching/training and enabling learning	3.59(0.98)[b]	3.42(1.09)	3.70(0.99)	2	220	0.31

Note. With significant *F* statistic, means in the same row that share subscripts indicated a significant difference ($p < .05$) via post hoc test. Unless otherwise indicated, $n = 200$ for Yes, $n = 22$ for No, and $n = 2$ for Prefer Not to Respond.
[b]$n = 199$.
*$p < .05$.

Table 31 ANOVA Results for Removed Competency Items Based on Possession of Degree in Student Affairs or Related Area

Abridged competency item	Yes *M(SD)*	No *M(SD)*	Prefer not to respond *M(SD)*	*dfb*	*dfw*	*F*
Establish rapport[3]	4.76(0.49)	4.82(0.40)	5.00(0.00)	2	221	0.42
Student multiple issues[4]	4.40(0.75)	4.41(0.73)	5.00(0.00)	2	221	0.64
Challenge colleagues[9]	3.52(0.95)[a]	3.62(1.07)[b]	3.00(0.00)	2	217	0.40
Encourage others[10]	4.26(0.72)[c]	4.10(0.89)[b]	5.00(0.00)	2	219	1.52
Refer to resources[11]	4.21(0.87)	4.09(1.15)	5.00(0.00)	2	221	0.96
Facilitate dialogue[21]	3.89(1.04)	4.14(0.89)		1	220	1.15
Act in accordance[25]	3.80(0.99)	3.64(1.22)	4.50(0.71)	2	221	0.75
Supervision techniques[37]	4.10(1.18)[c]	4.18(1.05)		1	219	0.11
Organizational improvement[48]	3.56(0.99)[d]	3.73(0.83)	3.00(0.00)	2	219	0.64
Leadership styles[49]	3.63(1.12)[a]	3.41(1.14)	3.00(0.00)	2	218	0.68
Policy issues on campus[52]	3.89(0.97)[c]	3.86(0.94)	3.00(0.00)	2	220	0.86
Differences public/private[55]	3.12(1.29)[c]	2.50(1.06)	3.00(1.41)	2	220	2.32
Institutional policy[66]	3.21(1.20)[c]	3.36(1.09)	2.50(0.71)	2	220	0.54
Interpret data[69]	3.52(1.18)[d]	3.57(1.21)[b]	4.00(1.41)	2	218	0.19
Use results[70]	3.63(1.10)[d]	3.50(1.30)	4.00(1.41)	2	219	0.25

Note. Unless otherwise indicated, $n = 200$ for Yes, $n = 22$ for No, and $n = 2$ for Prefer Not to Respond. For two missing fields in Prefer Not to Respond column, $n = 1$, so researcher removed case and performed ANOVA on two remaining groups (Yes and No). Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.
[a]$n = 197$. [b]$n = 21$. [c]$n = 199$. [d]$n = 198$.

Institutional Full-Time Student Enrollment

Factor Variables

Of the 16 factor variables derived from factor analyses, only 1, Operational Management, indicated a statistically significant mean difference, $F(9, 214) = 2.01$, $p <$

.05, in the degree of importance based on full-time enrollment (i.e., institutional size) at the respondent's institution (see Table 32). Post hoc analysis using the Bonferroni test indicated that the only statistically significant ($p < .05$) mean difference in groups occurred between full-time student enrollment of 5,000-9,999 ($M = 3.84$, $SD = 0.79$) and that of 40,000 and above ($M = 2.88$, $SD = 1.21$). There was no trend in responses as institutional size increased and no explanation for why just these two groups produced significant mean differences. However, it does make sense that practitioners working at "smaller" institutions (in this case, those with enrollment of 5,000-9,999) would find this factor, which includes facilities and budget management, more important because they are typically known to be generalists (i.e., wear many "hats") as compared to those who work at larger institutions, who may have access to other staff members who specialize in facilities and budget management, for example.

Table 32 ANOVA Results for Factor Variables Based on Full-Time Student Enrollment

Factor variable	Under 1,000 *M(SD)*	1,000-2,499 *M(SD)*	2,500-4,999 *M(SD)*	5,000-9,999 *M(SD)*	10,000-14,999 *M(SD)*	15,000-19,999 *M(SD)*	20,000-29,999 *M(SD)*	30,000-39,999 *M(SD)*	Over 40,000 *M(SD)*	Unsure/ none *M(SD)*	*dfb*	*dfw*	*F*
Advising and developing students	4.92 (0.14)	4.28 (0.61)	4.28 (0.59)	4.36 (0.49)	4.11 (0.65)	4.30 (0.63)	4.22 (0.58)	4.29 (0.52)	4.13 (0.58)	4.50 (0.71)	9	214	0.90
Communication skills	4.50 (0.00)	4.50 (0.56)	4.56 (0.54)	4.26 (0.75)	4.23 (0.65)	4.54 (0.44)	4.46 (0.51)	4.24 (0.51)	4.20 (0.64)	4.75 (0.35)	9	214	1.57
Knowledge of student development theory	2.93 (0.70)	3.46 (0.71)	3.51 (0.79)	3.72 (0.56)	3.46 (0.93)	3.50 (0.61)	3.45 (0.73)	3.595 (0.91)	3.48 (0.74)	3.50 (1.27)	9	214	0.51
Multicultural competence	3.00 (1.39)	4.02 (0.67)	4.14 (0.87)	4.06 (0.63)	4.09 (0.67)	3.86 (0.89)	3.95 (0.72)	4.17 (0.78)	3.98 (0.81)	4.13 (0.88)	9	214	0.95
Knowledge of ethics	3.22 (2.04)	2.81 (0.97)	2.58 (1.11)	2.78 (0.75)	2.69 (1.12)	3.04 (1.10)	2.82 (1.07)	2.74 (0.91)	2.55 (0.83)	3.00 (1.41)	9	214	0.53
Ethical practice	4.50 (0.87)	3.93 (0.73)	4.34 (0.73)	3.85 (0.60)	3.77 (0.91)	3.98 (1.09)	3.67 (0.94)	4.08 (0.77)	3.83 (0.83)	4.25 (0.35)	9	214	1.61
Operational management	2.78 (1.26)	3.35 (0.90)	3.71 (0.89)	3.84_a (0.79)	3.21 (0.92)	3.24 (1.19)	3.41 (1.06)	3.39 (0.71)	2.88_a (1.21)	3.83 (0.71)	9	214	2.01*
Efficient and sustainable use of resources	3.83 (0.29)	3.50 (0.86)	3.94 (0.78)	3.78 (0.76)	3.48 (0.91)	3.71 (0.88)	3.75 (0.64)	3.68 (0.92)	3.60 (0.94)	3.00 (1.41)	9	214	0.97
Managing interpersonal relations	4.17 (0.52)	4.17 (0.57)	4.16 (0.76)	4.28 (0.55)	4.01 (0.86)	3.83 (1.05)	4.13 (0.76)	4.03 (0.98)	3.90 (0.92)	4.88 (0.18)	9	214	0.97
Hiring practices	4.17 (1.04)	3.19 $(1.06)^b$	3.34 (1.07)	3.65 (1.05)	3.04 (1.31)	3.13 (1.10)	3.37 (1.06)	3.13 (1.32)	2.80 (1.34)	3.75 (0.35)	9	213	1.18
Understanding of organizational environment	4.27 (0.61)	3.94 $(0.71)^b$	4.02 (0.81)	3.86 (0.79)	3.66 (0.73)	3.70 (0.93)	3.61 (0.83)	3.76 (1.04)	3.63 (0.95)	3.80 (1.41)	9	213	0.86

Factor variable	Under 1,000 *M(SD)*	1,000-2,499 *M(SD)*	2,500-4,999 *M(SD)*	5,000-9,999 *M(SD)*	10,000-14,999 *M(SD)*	15,000-19,999 *M(SD)*	20,000-29,999 *M(SD)*	30,000-39,999 *M(SD)*	Over 40,000 *M(SD)*	Unsure/ none *M(SD)*	*dfb*	*dfw*	*F*
Creating and meeting work objectives	3.78 (1.02)	3.65 (0.76)[b]	3.71 (0.89)	3.76 (0.74)	3.44 (1.04)	3.60 (0.89)	3.65 (0.80)	3.49 (0.95)	3.75 (0.87)	3.67 (0.94)	9	213	0.36
Community awareness and engagement	3.42 (0.88)	3.44 (0.73)[b]	3.65 (0.86)	3.23 (0.77)	3.14 (0.98)	3.54 (0.97)	3.12 (0.93)	3.51 (0.86)	3.40 (0.98)	4.25 (0.00)	9	213	1.29
Knowledge of legal concepts and their application	2.78 (1.51)	2.64 (0.93)[b]	3.00 (0.96)	2.77 (0.74)	2.60 (1.06)	2.98 (1.21)	2.63 (0.95)	2.86 (1.05)	2.72 (1.06)	2.92 (1.30)	9	213	0.56
Research, assessment, and evaluation	4.06 (1.11)	3.46 (0.87)[b]	3.49 (1.01)	3.32 (0.76)	3.52 (0.83)	3.26 (1.11)	3.31 (0.92)	3.60 (1.02)	3.34 (0.93)	3.67 (0.71)	9	213	0.48
Teaching/training and enabling learning	3.00 (1.00)	3.41 (0.95)[b]	3.81 (1.02)	3.65 (0.76)	3.52 (0.94)	3.38 (1.29)	3.87 (0.71)	3.47 (1.16)	3.51 (1.08)	3.80 (0.28)	9	213	0.88

Note. With significant *F* statistic, means in the same row that share subscripts indicated a significant difference ($p < .05$) via post hoc test. Unless otherwise indicated, $n = 3$ for Under 1,000, $n = 45$ for 1,000-2,499, $n = 32$ for 2,500-4,999, $n = 27$ for 5,000-9,999, $n = 26$ for 10,000-14,999, $n = 24$ for 15,000-19,999, $n = 26$ for 20,000-29,999, $n = 19$ for 30,000-39,999, $n = 20$ for Over 40,000, and $n = 2$ for Unsure/None of the Above.

[b]$n = 44$.

*$p < .05$.

Removed Competency Items

Of the 15 competency items removed from the factor analyses, only 1, "Understanding of the legal differences between public and private institutions of higher education," indicated a statistically significant mean difference, $F(9, 213) = 2.65$, $p < .01$, in the degree of importance based on full-time enrollment at the respondent's institution (see Table 33). Post hoc analysis using the Bonferroni test indicated that no *pairs* of means differed, meaning that perhaps some other combination of means provided for the significant *F* statistic. However, a general trend emerged. As institutional size increased, the importance of this competency item decreased (although it was still considered minimally "somewhat important," even for the three highest institutional sizes studied). Perhaps this can be explained by the relationship between institutional size and institutional type, in that smaller institutions are more likely to be private. In that instance, practitioners, most of whom are trained at public institutions, must have a better understanding of how their ability to function, legally, differs in a private institutional setting. This difference could also be explained by the notion that practitioners at larger institutions may have access to more resources (in this case, legal assistance) and thus find less of a need to personally understand the differences between public and private institutions.

Table 33 ANOVA Results for Removed Competency Items Based on Full-Time Student Enrollment

Abridged competency item	Under 1,000 *M(SD)*	1,000-2,499 *M(SD)*	2,500-4,999 *M(SD)*	5,000-9,999 *M(SD)*	10,000-14,999 *M(SD)*	15,000-19,999 *M(SD)*	20,000-29,999 *M(SD)*	30,000-39,999 *M(SD)*	Over 40,000 *M(SD)*	Unsure/ none *M(SD)*	*dfb*	*dfw*	*F*
Establish rapport[3]	5.00 (0.00)	4.78 (0.42)	4.75 (0.51)	4.78 (0.42)	4.88 (0.33)	4.75 (0.53)	4.81 (0.40)	4.74 (0.45)	4.60 (0.68)	4.00 (1.41)	9	214	1.16
Student multiple issues[4]	4.67 (0.58)	4.38 (0.78)	4.34 (0.75)	4.44 (0.70)	4.58 (0.76)	4.46 (0.78)	4.35 (0.75)	4.32 (0.67)	4.45 (0.69)	3.50 (2.12)	9	214	0.62
Challenge colleagues[9]	3.33 (1.16)	3.64 (0.94)[a]	3.63 (1.01)	3.69 (0.88)[b]	3.35 (0.85)	3.29 (1.12)	3.73 (0.92)	3.44 (1.04)[c]	3.26 (0.93)[d]	3.50 (0.71)	9	210	0.76
Encourage others[10]	4.67 (0.58)	4.22 (0.74)	4.25 (0.72)	4.26 (0.71)	4.25 (0.85)[e]	4.33 (0.82)	4.12 (0.82)	4.32 (0.58)	4.20 (0.70)	4.50 (0.71)	9	212	0.29
Refer to resources[11]	4.67 (0.58)	4.07 (0.94)	4.16 (1.02)	4.19 (1.00)	4.08 (0.85)	4.37 (0.82)	4.27 (0.92)	4.11 (0.74)	4.45 (0.83)	4.50 (0.71)	9	214	0.59
Facilitate dialogue[21]	2.67 (1.53)	3.82 (1.05)	4.13 (1.04)	4.19 (0.79)	3.69 (0.97)	3.74 (1.14)[f]	4.00 (1.06)	3.89 (1.10)	3.90 (0.85)	5.00 (0.00)	9	213	1.41
Act in accordance[25]	3.67 (2.31)	3.93 (0.92)	3.78 (1.07)	3.67 (0.73)	3.77 (1.14)	3.87 (1.19)	3.62 (1.06)	3.89 (1.05)	3.70 (0.92)	4.00 (0.00)	9	214	0.30
Supervision techniques[37]	3.67 (1.53)	4.11 (1.10)[a]	4.38 (1.10)	4.44 (0.75)	3.96 (1.18)	3.61 (1.50)[f]	4.12 (1.07)	4.21 (1.08)	3.85 (1.46)	5.00 (0.00)	9	212	1.27
Organizational improvement[48]	3.33 (0.58)	3.55 (0.88)[a]	3.75 (0.98)	3.67 (0.92)	3.19 (1.06)	3.58 (0.97)	3.48 (0.87)[g]	3.74 (1.05)	3.55 (1.15)	5.00 (0.00)	9	212	1.19
Leadership styles[49]	3.00 (0.00)	3.64 (1.18)[a]	3.78 (1.07)	3.59 (1.08)	3.52 (1.36)[g]	3.70 (1.06)[f]	3.31 (1.05)	3.89 (1.15)	3.40 (1.00)	4.00 (0.00)	9	211	0.67
Policy issues on campus[52]	4.33 (0.58)	4.07 (0.82)[a]	4.03 (0.93)	3.85 (0.95)	3.85 (1.08)	3.96 (1.04)	3.42 (0.99)	3.74 (0.99)	3.85 (0.99)	4.50 (0.71)	9	213	1.18
Differences public/ Private[55]	4.33 (0.58)	3.23 (1.26)[a]	3.28 (1.28)	3.52 (1.25)	3.19 (1.23)	3.12 (1.33)	2.42 (1.17)	2.79 (1.03)	2.35 (1.27)	2.50 (2.12)	9	213	2.65**

Abridged competency item	Under 1,000 *M(SD)*	1,000-2,499 *M(SD)*	2,500-4,999 *M(SD)*	5,000-9,999 *M(SD)*	10,000-14,999 *M(SD)*	15,000-19,999 *M(SD)*	20,000-29,999 *M(SD)*	30,000-39,999 *M(SD)*	Over 40,000 *M(SD)*	Unsure/ none *M(SD)*	*dfb*	*dfw*	*F*
Institutional policy[66]	3.33 (1.53)	3.39 (1.24)[a]	3.50 (1.30)	3.11 (1.05)	3.08 (1.26)	3.08 (1.14)	3.12 (1.21)	3.21 (1.18)	2.90 (1.02)	4.00 (0.00)	9	213	0.67
Interpret data[69]	4.33 (1.16)	3.57 (1.07)[a]	3.65 (1.14)[h]	3.67 (1.07)	3.50 (1.30)	3.30 (1.43)[f]	3.42 (1.21)	3.37 (1.21)	3.60 (1.09)	2.50 (2.12)	9	211	0.56
Use results[70]	4.67 (0.58)	3.68 (0.93)[a]	3.63 (1.16)	3.78 (0.97)	3.52 (1.23)[g]	3.33 (1.44)	3.54 (1.17)	3.68 (1.16)	3.70 (1.08)	3.00 (1.41)	9	212	0.65

Note. With significant *F* statistic, post hoc tests did not indicate which groups produced statistically significant mean differences. Unless otherwise indicated, $n = 3$ for Under 1,000, $n = 45$ for 1,000-2,499, $n = 32$ for 2,500-4,999, $n = 27$ for 5,000-9,999, $n = 26$ for 10,000-14,999, $n = 24$ for 15,000-19,999, $n = 26$ for 20,000-29,999, $n = 19$ for 30,000-39,999, $n = 20$ for Over 40,000, and $n = 2$ for Unsure/None of the Above. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.

[a]$n = 44$. [b]$n = 26$. [c]$n = 18$. [d]$n = 19$. [e]$n = 24$. [f]$n = 23$. [g]$n = 25$. [h]$n = 31$.

**$p < .01$.

Research Question 2

What difference, if any, exists in the degree to which the competencies are important for work in entry-level positions, according to entry-level practitioners who work in different functional areas?

Factor Variables

Of the 16 factor variables, 10 indicated statistically significant mean differences in the degree of importance based on the four recoded functional areas (see Table 34). First, Ethical Practice indicated a statistically significant mean difference, $F(3, 220) = 2.76$, $p < .05$, in the degree of importance based on functional area. Post hoc analysis using the Bonferroni test indicated that no *pairs* of means differed, meaning that perhaps some other combination of means provided for the significant F statistic. While those working in Academic Assistance still found this factor to be "important," perhaps it was to a lower degree due to the nature of their work. This rating may not mean that these practitioners cannot recognize ethical issues and use institutional resources to resolve those issues, but rather that they, compared to the other areas, may not encounter ethical dilemmas as frequently as others in the field.

Second, Operational Management indicated a statistically significant mean difference, $F(3, 220) = 38.06$, $p < .01$, in the degree of importance based on functional area. Post hoc analysis using the Bonferroni test indicated that comparisons of five sets of groups had statistically significant ($p < .05$) mean differences. These differences occurred between Academic Assistance ($M = 1.84$, $SD = 0.81$) and Residence Life/Housing ($M = 3.63$, $SD = 0.77$), Academic Assistance and Student Involvement ($M = 3.83$, $SD = 0.68$),

Academic Assistance and Other Student Affairs (M = 3.04, SD = 1.05), Residence Life/Housing and Other Student Affairs, and Student Involvement and Other Student Affairs. In this study, the functional areas included in Other Student Affairs were very diverse and it therefore became difficult to draw inferences about its mean (although it was clear that it had the highest standard deviation of all areas). Based on typical work functions within academic advising, it is understandable that Academic Assistance provided the lowest mean (in this case, indicating this factor as "not important" to their positions). It also made some sense that, as stated before, since entry-level Residence Life/Housing practitioners often do not *operate* their residence halls, they would indicate a lower mean (although still "important") than Student Involvement practitioners. Then again, this lower mean could be scrutinized due to the number of respondents in the comparison (i.e., n = 129 for Residence Life/Housing and n = 40 for Student Involvement). Since hosting events and budgeting, two of three individual competency items included in this factor, are two significant functions of Student Involvement practitioners, it is possible that they contributed to Student Involvement producing the highest mean.

Third, Managing Interpersonal Relations indicated a statistically significant mean difference, $F(3, 220) = 17.31$, $p < .01$, in the degree of importance based on functional area. Post hoc analysis using the Bonferroni test indicated that comparisons of three sets of groups had statistically significant ($p < .05$) mean differences. These differences occurred between Academic Assistance (M = 3.13, SD = 1.14) and Residence Life/Housing (M = 4.23, SD = 0.58), Academic Assistance and Student Involvement (M = 4.31, SD = 0.46), and Academic Assistance and Other Student Affairs (M = 3.95, SD =

1.01). It is logical that, based on typical work functions which generally include teambuilding, motivational techniques, and conflict management, practitioners in Residence Life/Housing and Student Involvement would rate this factor as "very important."

Fourth, Hiring Practices indicated a statistically significant mean difference, $F(3, 219) = 14.43$, $p < .01$, in the degree of importance based on functional area. Post hoc analysis using the Bonferroni test indicated that comparisons of four sets of groups had statistically significant ($p < .05$) mean differences. These differences occurred between Residence Life/Housing ($M = 3.59$, $SD = 0.89$) and Academic Assistance ($M = 2.15$, $SD = 1.37$), Residence Life/Housing and Student Involvement ($M = 3.00$, $SD = 1.14$), Residence Life/Housing and Other Student Affairs ($M = 2.92$, $SD = 1.31$) and Academic Assistance and Student Involvement. Based on typical work functions which generally include, perhaps more so than other functional areas, annual hiring of a number of staff (e.g., resident assistants and hall directors), it made sense that Residence Life/Housing practitioners would provide for the highest mean. As Academic Assistance practitioners do not generally, as a major and continual function, hire staff, the fact that they indicated the factor as only "somewhat important" was not surprising.

Fifth, Understanding of Organizational Environment indicated a statistically significant mean difference, $F(3, 219) = 3.11$, $p < .05$, in the degree of importance based on functional area. Post hoc analysis using the Bonferroni test indicated that the only statistically significant ($p < .05$) mean difference in groups occurred between respondents who worked in Academic Assistance ($M = 3.45$, $SD = 1.22$) and those who worked in Student Involvement ($M = 4.09$, $SD = 0.65$). While clearly those in Academic Assistance

play a pivotal role within the institution, perhaps that their mean was significantly lower than those in Student Involvement relates to their role with students. The decisions that those in Academic Assistance help students make affect mainly the individual students. Those entry-level practitioners in Student Involvement generally have a great deal of student contact in advising the planning of student services and programs. The decisions that these students make generally affect more than themselves, including at times the university (e.g., image). As a result, perhaps the importance of this factor for Student Involvement practitioners was reflective of the necessity to understand culture, organizational structure, and politics, for example. That entry-level practitioners in all functional areas saw this factor as minimally "important" is interesting. While some in upper levels of management may think that entry-level practitioners are at such a "low" management level that they are free from worrying about culture and politics, clearly these entry-level practitioners felt otherwise.

Sixth, Creating and Meeting Work Objectives indicated a statistically significant mean difference, $F(3, 219) = 3.57$, $p < .05$, in the degree of importance based on functional area. Post hoc analysis using the Bonferroni test indicated that the only statistically significant ($p < .05$) mean difference in groups occurred between respondents who worked in Residence Life/Housing ($M = 3.52$, $SD = 0.81$) and those who worked in Student Involvement ($M = 4.01$, $SD = 0.57$). There was no explanation why these two groups produced significantly mean differences, except perhaps that there were 129 respondents in the former group, compared to only 39 in the latter.

Seventh, Community Awareness and Engagement indicated a statistically significant mean difference, $F(3, 219) = 2.85$, $p < .05$, in the degree of importance based

on functional area. Post hoc analysis using the Bonferroni test indicated that the only statistically significant ($p < .05$) mean difference in groups occurred between respondents who worked in Residence Life/Housing ($M = 3.28$, $SD = 0.86$) and those who worked in Student Involvement ($M = 3.71$, $SD = 0.73$). While those working in Residence Life/Housing still found this competency to be "important," perhaps it was to a lower degree because the nature of Student Involvement is more dynamic in this respect; Student Involvement includes student engagement, in both the community and on campus. With the exception of highly uneven group sizes potentially playing a role, there was no explanation why just these two groups produced significant mean differences.

Eighth, Knowledge of Legal Concepts and Their Application indicated a statistically significant mean difference, $F(3, 219) = 7.55$, $p < .01$, in the degree of importance based on functional area. Post hoc analysis using the Bonferroni test indicated that comparisons of four sets of groups had statistically significant ($p < .05$) mean differences. These differences occurred between respondents who worked in Academic Assistance ($M = 2.11$, $SD = 1.13$) and those who worked in Residence Life/Housing ($M = 2.70$, $SD = 0.92$), respondents who worked in Academic Assistance and those who worked in Student Involvement ($M = 3.25$, $SD = 0.94$), respondents who worked in Academic Assistance and those who worked in Other Student Affairs ($M = 2.93$, $SD = 0.91$), and respondents who worked in Student Involvement and those who worked in Residence Life/Housing. Those who worked in Academic Assistance differed significantly from the other three functional areas regarding the importance of the knowledge and application of law. This again was likely a function of the nature of their work. Due to, for example, the liability related to extracurricular activities (i.e., Student

Involvement) and students living together (i.e., Residence Life/Housing), it is understandable that practitioners who work in these areas must have a heightened understanding of the law as applied to student affairs, even though most should have access to legal counsel at their institutions. Even considering heightened liability for both of these areas, it appears that there was still a significant difference, in the degree of importance of this factor, between them, with Student Involvement producing the highest mean.

Ninth, Research, Assessment, and Evaluation indicated a statistically significant mean difference, $F(3, 219) = 2.99$, $p < .05$, in the degree of importance based on functional area. Post hoc analysis using the Bonferroni test indicated that the only statistically significant ($p < .05$) mean difference in groups occurred between respondents who worked in Residence Life/Housing ($M = 3.29$, $SD = 0.85$) and those who worked in Student Involvement ($M = 3.75$, $SD = 0.67$). Perhaps Student Involvement produced the highest mean due to the necessity to frequently justify its importance on the college campus, thus necessitating skills in assessing and evaluating student learning in the extracurricular sense. While Residence Life/Housing still found this factor to be "important," perhaps it was to a significantly less degree as a result of the lack of the need to justify providing living accommodations for students.

Finally, Teaching/Training and Enabling Learning indicated a statistically significant mean difference, $F(3, 219) = 6.58$, $p < .01$, in the degree of importance based on functional area. Post hoc analysis using the Bonferroni test indicated that comparisons of three sets of groups had statistically significant ($p < .05$) mean differences. These differences occurred between respondents who worked in Academic Assistance ($M =$

2.78, *SD* = 1.37) and those who worked in Residence Life/Housing (*M* = 3.62, *SD* = 0.89), respondents who worked in Academic Assistance and those who worked in Student Involvement (*M* = 3.63, *SD* = 0.76), and respondents who worked in Academic Assistance and those who worked in Other Student Affairs (*M* = 3.88, *SD* = 1.02). Academic Assistance produced the lowest mean (although respondents still considered this factor "somewhat important"). Again, this may relate to the role of these practitioners with students, compared to, say, the role of Residence Life/Housing and Student Involvement practitioners with their students. While those in Academic Assistance are poised to provide guidance on academic endeavors (e.g., which classes are needed to complete a minor), those in Residence Life/Housing and Student Involvement are poised to ensure the cultivation of learning environments (e.g., through the conduct process or through learning how to resolve conflict in a student organization, respectively).

Table 34 ANOVA Results for Factor Variables Based on Recoded Functional Area

Factor variable	Academic assistance *M(SD)*	Residence life/housing *M(SD)*	Student involvement *M(SD)*	Other student affairs *M(SD)*	*dfb*	*dfw*	*F*
Advising and developing students	4.40(0.77)	4.21(0.56)	4.36(0.49)	4.27(0.64)	3	220	1.20
Communication skills	4.39(0.72)	4.40(0.57)	4.31(0.53)	4.55(0.60)	3	220	0.97
Knowledge of student development theory	3.33(0.96)	3.48(0.72)	3.58(0.53)	3.66(0.89)	3	220	1.03
Multicultural competence	3.79(1.09)	4.08(0.72)	3.98(0.76)	3.99(0.63)	3	220	1.02
Knowledge of ethics	2.68(1.11)	2.66(0.96)	2.86(1.02)	3.13(1.04)	3	220	2.05
Ethical practice	3.59(1.04)	3.91(0.83)	4.11(0.72)	4.16(0.72)	3	220	2.76*
Operational management	$1.84_{a,b,c}$(0.81)	$3.63_{a,d}$(0.77)	$3.83_{b,e}$(0.68)	$3.04_{c,d,e}$(1.05)	3	220	38.06**
Efficient and sustainable use of resources	3.57(1.08)	3.62(0.83)	3.81(0.66)	3.75(0.88)	3	220	0.73
Managing interpersonal relations	$3.13_{a,b,c}$(1.14)	4.23_{a}(0.58)	4.31_{b}(0.46)	3.95_{c}(1.01)	3	220	17.31**
Hiring practices	$2.15_{a,b}$(1.37)	$3.59_{a,c,d}$(0.89)	$3.00_{b,d}$(1.14)[f]	2.92_{c}(1.31)	3	219	14.43**
Understanding of organizational environment	3.45_{a}(1.22)	3.77(0.78)	4.09_{a}(0.65)[f]	3.87(0.83)	3	219	3.11*
Creating and meeting work objectives	3.61(1.28)	3.52_{a}(0.81)	4.01_{a}(0.57)[f]	3.71(0.82)	3	219	3.57*
Community awareness and engagement	3.27(1.08)	3.28_{a}(0.86)	3.71_{a}(0.73)[f]	3.54(0.86)	3	219	2.85*
Knowledge of legal concepts and their application	$2.11_{a,b,c}$(1.13)	$2.70_{a,d}$(0.92)	$3.25_{b,d}$(0.94)[f]	2.93_{c}(0.91)	3	219	7.55**
Research, assessment, and evaluation	3.45(1.28)	3.29_{a}(0.85)	3.75_{a}(0.67)[f]	3.58(1.06)	3	219	2.99*
Teaching/training and enabling learning	$2.78_{a,b,c}$(1.37)	3.62_{a}(0.89)	3.63_{b}(0.76)[f]	3.88_{c}(1.02)	3	219	6.58**

Note. With significant *F* statistic, means in the same row that share subscripts indicated a significant difference ($p < .05$) via post hoc test. Unless otherwise indicated, $n = 23$ for respondents working in Academic Assistance, $n = 129$ for respondents working in Residence Life/Housing, $n = 40$ for respondents working in Student Involvement, and $n = 32$ for respondents working in Other Student Affairs.

[f] $n = 39$.

*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$.

Removed Competency Items

Of the 15 items removed from the factor analyses, 7 indicated statistically significant mean differences in the degree of importance based on functional area (see Table 35). First, "Ability to establish rapport with others (including students and colleagues)" indicated a significant mean difference, $F(3, 220) = 3.33$, $p < .05$, in the degree of importance based on functional area. Post hoc analysis using the Bonferroni test indicated that no *pairs* of means differed, meaning that perhaps some other combination of means provided for the significant F statistic. All functional areas found this individual competency item to be "very important," which makes sense due to the nature of the work of every functional area in the field.

Second, "Ability to refer others to on- or off-campus resources (e.g., offices, outside agencies) when needed" indicated a significant mean difference, $F(3, 220) = 2.93$, $p < .05$, in the degree of importance based on functional area. Post hoc analysis using the Bonferroni test indicated that the only statistically significant ($p < .05$) mean difference in groups occurred between respondents who worked in Academic Assistance ($M = 4.65$, $SD = 0.71$) and those who worked in Student Involvement ($M = 3.97$, $SD = 0.92$). While those working in Student Involvement still found this competency to be "important," perhaps it was to a significantly lower degree due to the nature of their work. Since the goal of higher education is academic completion and students must come into contact with an academic advisor at some point in their academic careers (as opposed to Student Involvement, which will never encounter a vast majority of the institution's students), perhaps those in Academic Assistance feel the need to have a grasp of more of the

resources and services available on campus, including those in the academic *and* extracurricular worlds.

Third, "Ability to facilitate dialogue between groups of different cultures, perspectives, and/or worldviews" indicated a statistically significant mean difference, $F(3, 219) = 6.82$, $p < .01$, in the degree of importance based on functional area. Post hoc analysis using the Bonferroni test indicated that comparisons of two sets of groups had statistically significant ($p < .05$) mean differences. These differences occurred between Academic Assistance ($M = 3.13$, $SD = 1.36$) and Residence Life/Housing ($M = 4.11$, $SD = 0.82$) and Academic Assistance and Student Involvement ($M = 3.85$, $SD = 1.05$). It seems reasonable that, based on typical work functions which generally include working with multiple students simultaneously (e.g., whether it be due to roommate or student organization executive board conflicts), practitioners in Residence Life/Housing and Student Involvement would rate this individual competency item higher than those in Academic Affairs, who generally work with one student at a time.

Fourth, "Ability to use basic supervision techniques within my work setting" indicated a statistically significant mean difference, $F(3, 218) = 33.37$, $p < .01$, in the degree of importance based on functional area. Post hoc analysis using the Bonferroni test indicated that comparisons of four sets of groups had statistically significant ($p < .05$) mean differences. These differences occurred between Academic Assistance ($M = 2.39$, $SD = 1.34$) and Residence Life/Housing ($M = 4.50$, $SD = 0.73$), Academic Assistance and Student Involvement ($M = 4.21$, $SD = 0.86$), Academic Assistance and Other Student Affairs ($M = 3.65$, $SD = 1.52$), and Residence Life/Housing and Other Student Affairs. It would appear that entry-level practitioners in Academic Assistance may not supervise

many students or staff members, compared especially to those in Residence Life/Housing and Student Involvement, and therefore find supervision techniques to be only "somewhat important."

Fifth, "Understanding of a variety of leadership styles (e.g., symbolic, expert, inspirational, etc.)" indicated a statistically significant mean difference, $F(3, 217) = 3.69$, $p < .05$, in the degree of importance based on functional area. Post hoc analysis using the Bonferroni test indicated that the only statistically significant ($p < .05$) mean difference in groups occurred between respondents who worked in Academic Assistance ($M = 3.13$, $SD = 1.42$) and those who worked in Student Involvement ($M = 4.05$, $SD = 0.93$). It made sense that, since leadership and leadership development are a central mission of Student Involvement, these practitioners would indicate the highest mean for this individual competency item and that those practitioners in Academic Assistance would indicate the lowest mean for it.

Sixth, "Ability to correctly interpret data collected for assessment/evaluation/research" indicated a statistically significant mean difference, $F(3, 217) = 5.00$, $p < .01$, in the degree of importance based on functional area. Post hoc analysis using the Bonferroni test indicated that the only statistically significant ($p < .05$) mean difference in groups occurred between respondents who worked in Residence Life/Housing ($M = 3.34$, $SD = 1.11$) and those who worked in Other Student Affairs ($M = 4.03$, $SD = 1.12$). As mentioned previously, the individual functional areas re-coded into Other Student Affairs were very diverse. As a result, drawing a conclusion based on this group comparison was difficult. Regardless, it appears that the need to interpret data was less important (although still "important") to the three other areas.

Finally, "Ability to interpret and use results of assessment/evaluation/research" indicated a statistically significant mean difference, $F(3, 218) = 4.55$, $p < .01$, in the degree of importance based on functional area. Post hoc analysis using the Bonferroni test indicated that comparisons of two sets of groups had statistically significant ($p < .05$) mean differences. These differences occurred between Other Student Affairs ($M = 4.13$, $SD = 1.04$) and Academic Assistance ($M = 3.30$, $SD = 1.58$) and Other Student Affairs and Residence Life/Housing ($M = 3.47$, $SD = 1.03$). Again, interpretation of these comparisons was difficult as a result of the functional areas included within Other Student Affairs.

For a summary of the outcome of all ANOVAs for this Research Question, see Tables 111 and 112 in Appendix W.

Table 35 ANOVA Results for Removed Competency Items Based on Recoded Functional Area

Abridged competency item	Academic assistance *M(SD)*	Residence life/housing *M(SD)*	Student involvement *M(SD)*	Other student affairs *M(SD)*	*dfb*	*dfw*	*F*
Establish rapport[3]	4.91(0.42)	4.68(0.53)	4.90(0.30)	4.81(0.40)	3	220	3.33*
Student multiple issues[4]	4.52(0.79)	4.45(0.70)	4.35(0.77)	4.22(0.87)	3	220	1.08
Challenge colleagues[9]	3.17(1.19)	3.55(0.91)[e]	3.56(0.97)[f]	3.63(0.93)[g]	3	216	1.22
Encourage others[10]	4.22(0.90)	4.15(0.75)[h]	4.38(0.63)	4.50(0.62)	3	218	2.47
Refer to resources[11]	4.65_{a}(0.71)	4.21(0.86)	3.97_{a}(0.92)	4.13(1.04)	3	220	2.93*
Facilitate dialogue[21]	$3.13_{a,b}$(1.36)	4.11_{a}(0.82)	3.85_{b}(1.05)	3.77(1.18)[i]	3	219	6.82**
Act in accordance[25]	3.61(1.23)	3.69(1.01)	4.00(0.85)	4.06(1.01)	3	220	2.04
Supervision techniques[37]	$2.39_{a,b,c}$(1.34)	$4.50_{a,d}$(0.73)	4.21_{b}(0.86)[f]	$3.65_{c,d}$(1.52)[i]	3	218	33.37**
Organizational improvement[48]	3.17(1.27)	3.59(0.87)[e]	3.82(0.82)[f]	3.50(1.22)	3	218	2.25
Leadership styles[49]	3.13_{a}(1.42)	3.58(1.06)[e]	4.05_{a}(0.93)[j]	3.50(1.14)	3	217	3.69*
Policy issues on campus[52]	3.78(1.28)	3.78(0.94)	4.23(0.71)[f]	3.94(0.98)	3	219	2.33
Differences public/private[55]	2.91(1.51)	3.08(1.18)	3.31(1.34)[f]	2.75(1.39)	3	219	1.23
Institutional policy[66]	3.13(1.36)	3.15(1.10)	3.38(1.21)[f]	3.34(1.38)	3	219	0.57
Interpret data[69]	3.23(1.60)[k]	3.34_{a}(1.11)	3.89(0.98)[j]	4.03_{a}(1.12)	3	217	5.00**
Use results[70]	3.30_{a}(1.58)	3.47_{b}(1.03)[e]	3.90(1.00)[f]	$4.13_{a,b}$(1.04)	3	218	4.55**

Note. With significant *F* statistic, means in the same row that share subscripts indicated a significant difference ($p < .05$) via hoc test. Unless otherwise indicated, $n = 23$ for respondents working in Academic Assistance, $n = 129$ for respondents working in Residence Life/Housing, $n = 40$ for respondents working in Student Involvement, and $n = 32$ for respondents working in Other Student Affairs. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.

[e]$n = 128$. [f]$n = 39$. [g]$n = 30$. [h]$n = 127$. [i]$n = 31$. [j]$n = 38$. [k]$n = 22$.

*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$.

Research Question 3

What difference, if any, exists in the degree to which the competencies are important for work in entry-level positions, according to entry-level practitioners who work in different institutional types?

Factor Variables

Since there was only one participant from a for-profit institution who responded to all competency items (the other responded to only about half of the items), the researcher removed these two cases from the data set prior to analysis. Of the 16 factor variables derived from factor analyses, only 1, Understanding of Organizational Environment, indicated a statistically significant mean difference, $F(1, 220) = 4.67$, $p < .05$, in the degree of importance between four-year private institutions ($M = 3.92$, $SD = 0.78$) and four-year public institutions ($M = 3.68$, $SD = 0.87$; see Table 36). While respondents from both types of institutions found this factor, which included understanding institutional culture, organizational structure, institutional governance, and politics, to be "important," those working at private institutions found it to be additionally important for their positions. Perhaps respondents from private institutions, most of whom were trained at public institutions, had a greater need to decipher the institutional culture and political landscape and learn about the university's organizational structure and governance.

Table 36 ANOVA Results for Factor Variables Based on Institutional Type

Factor variable	Four-year private *M(SD)*	Four-year public *M(SD)*	*dfb*	*dfw*	*F*
Advising and developing students	4.27(0.61)	4.25(0.55)	1	220	0.05
Communication skills	4.45(0.64)	4.36(0.52)	1	220	1.44
Knowledge of student development theory	3.49(0.75)	3.53(0.74)	1	220	0.16
Multicultural competence	4.03(0.74)	4.03(0.76)	1	220	0.00
Knowledge of ethics	2.77(0.97)	2.77(1.03)	1	220	0.00
Ethical practice	4.06(0.73)	3.85(0.92)	1	220	3.61
Operational management	3.51(0.90)	3.29(1.05)	1	220	2.88
Efficient and sustainable use of resources	3.70(0.83)	3.64(0.85)	1	220	0.36
Managing interpersonal relations	4.16(0.70)	4.02(0.87)	1	220	1.80
Hiring practices	3.27(1.12)	3.21(1.18)	1	220	0.14
Understanding of organizational environment	3.92(0.78)	3.68(0.87)	1	220	4.67*
Creating and meeting work objectives	3.71(0.78)	3.56(0.92)	1	220	1.67
Community awareness and engagement	3.41(0.82)	3.39(0.93)	1	220	0.02
Knowledge of legal concepts and their application	2.76(0.91)	2.80(1.05)	1	220	0.08
Research, assessment, and evaluation	3.42(0.91)	3.43(0.94)	1	220	0.00
Teaching/training and enabling learning	3.55(1.00)	3.61(0.97)	1	220	0.18

Note. With significant *F* statistic, means across each row indicated a significant difference due to presence of only two groups. Unless otherwise indicated, $n = 111$ for Four-Year Private and $n = 111$ for Four-Year Public.
*$p < .05$.

Removed Competency Items

Of the 15 competency items removed from the factor analyses, only 1, "Understanding of the legal differences between public and private institutions of higher

education," indicated a statistically significant mean difference, $F(1, 220) = 21.70$, $p < .01$, in the degree of importance between those who worked at four-year public institutions ($M = 2.67$, $SD = 1.27$) and those worked at four-year private institutions ($M = 3.43$, $SD = 1.17$; see Table 37). Perhaps this can again be explained due to most of these practitioners being trained at public institutions. As a result, those practitioners who work at private institutions must have a better understanding of how their ability to function, legally, differs from their colleagues at public institutions.

For a summary of the outcome of all ANOVAs for this Research Question, see Tables 113 and 114 in Appendix W.

Table 37 ANOVA Results for Removed Competency Items Based on Institutional Type

Abridged competency item	Four-year private *M(SD)*	Four-year public *M(SD)*	*dfb*	*dfw*	*F*
Establish rapport[3]	4.77(0.44)	4.75(0.51)	1	220	0.18
Student multiple issues[4]	4.32(0.78)	4.49(0.71)	1	220	2.63
Challenge colleagues[9]	4.32(0.78)	4.49(0.71)	1	220	2.63
Encourage others[10]	4.20(0.77)	4.29(0.70)[a]	1	218	0.92
Refer to resources[11]	4.13(0.96)	4.29(0.82)	1	220	1.81
Facilitate dialogue[21]	3.85(1.00)	4.01(1.01)[b]	1	219	1.44
Act in accordance[25]	3.85(0.97)	3.76(1.03)	1	220	0.45
Supervision techniques[37]	4.14(1.09)	4.09(1.22)[b]	1	219	0.12
Organizational improvement[48]	3.62(0.94)	3.52(1.01)[b]	1	219	0.62
Leadership styles[49]	3.62(1.15)	3.59(1.09)[a]	1	218	0.05
Policy issues on campus[52]	4.01(0.91)	3.76(1.00)	1	220	3.86
Differences public/private[55]	3.43(1.17)	2.67(1.27)	1	220	21.70**
Institutional policy[66]	3.25(1.27)	3.19(1.10)	1	220	0.16
Interpret data[69]	3.62(1.12)[b]	3.44(1.24)[b]	1	218	1.31
Use results[70]	3.67(1.04)	3.57(1.21)[b]	1	219	0.39

Note. With significant *F* statistic, means across each row indicated a significant difference due to presence of only two groups. Unless otherwise indicated, $n = 111$ for Four-Year Private and $n = 111$ for Four-Year Public. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.

[a]$n = 109$. [b]$n = 110$.

**$p < .01$.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

Study Overview

Within the field of student affairs, staff members in all levels of management play a crucial role in student development. They have the ability to influence the success or failure not only of the functional area (e.g., residence life/housing, student activities, or admissions/enrollment management) in which they work, but also of an institution's student affairs division. As such, they need the skills, knowledge, and attitudes to be effective in their positions (Komives & Woodard, 1996). That being said, current "literature reveals no consensus about core competencies for student affairs practitioners" (Pope & Reynolds, 1997, p. 268).

In an effort to begin to address this lack of an agreed-upon set of competencies, the American College Personnel Association (ACPA) created a steering committee comprised of student affairs professionals representing a variety of positions, functional areas, and expertise on the topic. This steering committee created a report, *Professional Competencies*, which was intended to serve as the foundation for professional development in the field (Steering Committee on Professional Competencies [SCPC], 2007). At the time of this study, no research-based work had been completed to validate the importance of these competencies.

As a result, the purpose of this study was to determine (a) the degree to which the competencies listed in the 2007 SCPC report were important for work in entry-level student affairs positions, according to entry-level practitioners; (b) the difference, if any, in the degree to which the competencies were important for work in entry-level positions,

according to entry-level practitioners who worked in different functional areas of the field; and (c) the difference, if any, in the degree to which the competencies were important for work in entry-level positions, according to entry-level practitioners who worked in different institutional types.

In an effort to create a more manageable study, the researcher chose to focus solely on those competencies deemed as "basic" within the report. After re-writing them for simplicity, the researcher sent, via an online questionnaire, a list of 75 competencies to a sample of 970 members of ACPA who were self-selected as *entry-level* members. Some of these sample members opted out and some were deemed ineligible to participate (i.e., they were not currently serving in entry-level positions, as defined by the researcher). Some e-mails were returned undeliverable. In the end, 319 sample members responded in some way (see Response Rate in chapter 3 for clarification), yielding a response rate of 34.3%. The researcher received 224 usable responses.

The statistics utilized to analyze the responses for each competency item included the mean and standard deviation. In addition to these basic statistics, the researcher conducted exploratory factor analysis on the individual competency items within each SCPC cluster to group them into fewer constructs (i.e., factors) such that additional, more manageable analyses could be run on the factor variables. In this study specifically, 16 factors were extracted (i.e., 16 factor variables were created), accounting for 60 individual competency items (see Appendix T for a summary). During this process, a total of 15 individual competency items were removed from the factor analyses (see Appendix U). To determine if there was a difference in the degree of importance for

responses between groups within a specific demographic variable, the researcher utilized analysis of variance (ANOVA).

Discussion

Research Question 1

To what degree are the competencies important for work in entry-level positions, according to entry-level practitioners?

Advising and Helping

Based on a review of all responses, the SCPC Advising and Helping cluster appeared to be the most important for entry-level work. Of the 11 individual competencies within this cluster, 10 were rated at least 4 (*very important to me in my current position*). In addition, this cluster contained 7 of the 10 highest rated individual competencies. This should come as no surprise, as this cluster forms the foundation of the purpose of the field, including competencies that all practitioners in entry-level positions utilize.

When the items within this cluster (two factor variables and five items removed via factor analysis) were analyzed by demographic variable, only a few significant differences arose. The Advising and Developing Students factor variable indicated a significant difference based on age. As age increased, the importance of this factor decreased slightly. Two individual items, "Ability to establish rapport with others (including students and colleagues)" and "Ability to refer others to on- or off-campus resources (e.g., offices, outside agencies) when needed" indicated a significant difference

based on gender, with females indicating a higher level of importance for both. Outside of these, respondents indicated no significant differences in the degree of importance of Advising and Helping competencies based on years in current full-time position, years in the field, highest degree earned, possession of a student affairs or related degree, and institutional enrollment.

Pluralism and Inclusion

Respondents rated the SCPC Pluralism and Inclusion cluster as the second most important. With all five individual competencies being rated by all respondents as slightly above or below 4 (*very important to me in my current position*), this cluster was found to be "very important" for entry-level work. Since entry-level student affairs practitioners work with students who come from a variety of backgrounds, it is reassuring that these competencies were given such a high priority.

When the items within this cluster (one factor variable and one item removed via factor analysis) were analyzed by demographic variable, no significant differences arose, meaning that respondents indicated no significant differences in the degree of importance of Pluralism and Inclusion competencies based on years in current full-time position, years in the field, age, gender, highest degree earned, possession of a student affairs or related degree, and institutional enrollment.

Leadership and Management/Administration

Based on a review of all responses, 26 of the 27 individual competencies in the SCPC Leadership and Management/Administration cluster were rated at least 3 (*important to me in my current position*), thus determined to be "important" for entry-

level work. Even though the name of this cluster would lead some to believe that these competencies are most applicable to those in mid- and upper-level positions, entry-level respondents found it to be the third most important cluster, proving that even entry-level practitioners need a variety of managerial and administrative skills.

When the items within this cluster (seven factor variables and four items removed via factor analysis) were analyzed by demographic variable, several significant differences arose. Two factor variables, Efficient and Sustainable Use of Resources and Community Awareness and Engagement, indicated a significant difference based on age. As age increased, the importance of the both factors decreased. In addition, Community Awareness and Engagement indicated a significant difference based on the possession of a student affairs or related degree, with those possessing this type of degree indicating a higher level of importance. The factor variable Operational Management indicated a significant difference based on institutional full-time student enrollment, although no general trend emerged. Finally, the individual item "Knowledge of major policy issues and decisions on my campus" indicated a significant difference based on respondent years in his or her current position, although no general trend emerged. Beyond these, respondents indicated no significant differences in the degree of importance of Leadership and Management/Administration competencies based on years in the field, gender, and highest degree earned.

Teaching

Respondents rated the SCPC Teaching cluster as the fourth most important. All five individual competencies in this cluster were rated at least 3 (*important to me in my current position*), thus appearing to be, overall, "important" for entry-level work.

When the item within this cluster (one factor variable) was analyzed by demographic variable, no significant differences arose, meaning that respondents indicated no significant differences in the degree of importance of Teaching competencies based on years in current full-time position, years in the field, age, gender, highest degree earned, possession of a student affairs or related degree, and institutional enrollment.

Student Learning and Development

Based on a review of all responses, four of the five individual competencies in the SCPC Student Learning and Development cluster were rated at least 3 (*important to me in my current position*), thus appearing to be "important" for entry-level work. That this cluster was the fifth most important is somewhat disconcerting since one of the core functions of the field is to help students learn and develop. It is especially interesting since entry-level practitioners generally have significant levels of student contact and almost 90% of respondents held a student affairs or related degree. Perhaps the fact that the competencies within this cluster are knowledge-based (i.e., knowledge of theory), rather than application-based (i.e., application of theory), explains why entry-level practitioners did not rate this cluster more highly. For example, respondents may have

believed that the *application* of identity development theories was more important than the *knowledge* of theory names and developmental stages or levels.

When the item within this cluster (one factor variable) was analyzed by demographic variable, only one significant difference arose. The Knowledge of Student Development Theory factor variable indicated a significant difference based on the possession of a student affairs or related degree, with those possessing this type of degree indicating a higher level of importance. Outside of this, respondents indicated no significant differences in the degree of importance of Student Learning and Development competencies based on years in current full-time position, years in the field, age, gender, highest degree earned, and institutional enrollment.

Assessment, Evaluation, and Research

All nine individual competencies in the SCPC Assessment, Evaluation, and Research cluster were rated at least 3 (*important to me in my current position*). The cluster was therefore found to be, overall, "important" for entry-level work and was the sixth most important cluster. It seems that, generally speaking, respondents did not perform a great deal of these types of functions, perhaps due to the nature of their job responsibilities and/or because many of them had access to other staff members or entire offices/departments dedicated to performing assessment and evaluation.

When the items within this cluster (one factor variable and three items removed via factor analysis) were analyzed by demographic variable, only two significant differences arose. The Research, Assessment, and Evaluation factor variable indicated a significant difference based on age. As age increased, the importance of this factor

decreased. The individual item "Ability to interpret and use results of assessment/evaluation/research" indicated a significant difference based on respondent highest degree earned, with those possessing a master's degree indicating a higher level of importance. Beyond these, respondents indicated no significant differences in the degree of importance of Assessment, Evaluation, and Research competencies based on years in current full-time position, years in the field, gender, possession of a student affairs or related degree, and institutional enrollment.

Ethics

Based on a review of all responses, four of the six individual competencies in the SCPC Ethics cluster were rated at least 3 (*important to me in my current position*), thus determined to be "important" for entry-level work. It was found to be the seventh most important cluster. It is somewhat troubling that the cluster containing ethics-related competencies was not rated more highly. Reviewing the competencies individually, however, allowed the researcher to more easily justify its rating. Four of the six items within the cluster relate to the knowledge and understanding of specific ethical statements of professional associations. It would seem that being able to recognize and resolve ethical issues based on general societal principles is more important than having an understanding of ACPA's ethical statement, for example.

When the items within this cluster (two factor variables and one item removed via factor analysis) were analyzed by demographic variable, only one significant difference arose. The Knowledge of Ethics factor variable indicated a significant difference based on respondent years in his or her current position, although no trend emerged. Beyond

this, respondents indicated no significant differences in the degree of importance of Ethics competencies based on years in the field, age, gender, highest degree earned, possession of a student affairs or related degree, and institutional enrollment.

Legal Foundations

Overall, the SCPC Legal Foundations cluster appeared to be the least important for entry-level work. Of the seven individual competencies within this cluster, five were rated 2 (*somewhat important to me in my current position*), and the other two were rated only slightly above 3 (*important to me in my current position*). In addition, this cluster contained 5 of the 10 lowest rated individual competencies. It is not surprising that this cluster was rated least important. As mentioned in chapter 4, perhaps these competencies were not applied or utilized in respondents' daily work, either because they knew that experts (i.e., institutional lawyers) existed for this reason and/or because their supervisors were the ones making contact with legal counsel when questions or concerns arose. While this may have been the least important cluster, it should be noted that it was overall still found to be "somewhat important" to entry-level work.

When the items within this cluster (one factor variable and one item removed via factor analysis) were analyzed by demographic variable, only one significant difference arose. The individual item "Understanding of the legal differences between public and private institutions of higher education" indicated a significant difference based on institutional full-time student enrollment. Generally, as institutional size increased, the importance of this competency item decreased. Outside of this, respondents indicated no significant differences in the degree of importance of Legal Foundations competencies

based on years in current full-time position, years in the field, age, gender, highest degree earned, and possession of a student affairs or related degree.

Summary

Of the 75 individual competency items studied, 20 were given an importance rating of at least 4, indicating that they were minimally *very important to me in my current position*; 46 were rated between 3 and 4, indicating they were at least *important to me in my current position*; and 9 were rated between 2 and 3, indicating they were at least *somewhat important to me in my current position*. No individual competency item was rated below 2, indicating that all 75 competency items were, minimally, "somewhat important" for those in entry-level positions. In fact, 66 (i.e., 20 + 46) of the competency items were found to be, at a minimum, "important" for entry-level positions. Based on the fact that almost 90% of respondents earned a degree in a student affairs or related area, it is not surprising that so many SCPC competencies were found to be important to such a high degree. Looking at the cluster level, Advising and Helping seemed to be the most important, while Legal Foundations seemed to be the least important (yet still minimally "somewhat important").

Regarding the seven studied demographic items (i.e., years in current full-time position, years in the field, age, gender, highest degree earned, possession of a student affairs or related degree, and institutional enrollment) overall, only a few factor variables or removed competency items indicated significant differences. One demographic item in particular, years in the field, actually produced no significant differences between groups, which was a surprise to the researcher. The researcher found it additionally interesting

that years in current full-time position, age, highest educational degree earned, possession of a student affairs or related degree, and institutional enrollment did not produce at least a few more significant differences for factor variables and/or removed competency items.

Research Question 2

What difference, if any, exists in the degree to which the competencies are important for work in entry-level positions, according to entry-level practitioners who work in different functional areas?

As mentioned previously, all functional areas represented by respondents were re-coded into four groups (i.e., Academic Assistance, Residence Life/Housing, Student Involvement, and Other Student Affairs) for easier analysis. Other Student Affairs became the "miscellaneous" grouping of functional areas, and included Admissions/Enrollment Management, Alcohol and Other Drug Education, Career Planning/Placement Services, Combo (Academic Advising and Residence Life), Combo (Learning Community and Student Programs), Financial Aid, GLBTQ Awareness/Services, Judicial Affairs, Multicultural Affairs/Services, Non-traditional (Commuter/Adult) Services, Orientation/New Student Programs, Parent Programs, Recreational Sports/Services, and Retention.

Advising and Helping

Within the SCPC Advising and Helping cluster, neither factor variable (Advising and Developing Students and Communication Skills, which together accounted for 6 of 11 individual competency items) indicated significant differences between recoded functional areas. However, two of the five individual competency items removed from

factor analysis, “Ability to establish rapport with others (including students and colleagues)” and “Ability to refer others to on- or off-campus resources (e.g., offices, outside agencies) when needed,” indicated significant mean differences. For the former item, post hoc tests did not indicate which groups provided for the difference; for the latter item, the difference existed between Academic Assistance (which produced the highest mean) and Student Involvement (which produced the lowest mean). For the most part, with the exception of these two individual competency items, entry-level practitioners who worked in different functional areas found no difference in the degree of importance of the competencies within this cluster.

Pluralism and Inclusion

Within the SCPC Pluralism and Inclusion cluster, the factor variable (Multicultural Competence, which accounted for four of five individual competency items) did not indicate significant differences between recoded functional areas. However, the individual competency item removed from factor analysis, “Ability to facilitate dialogue between groups of different cultures, perspectives, and/or worldviews,” indicated significant mean differences between Academic Assistance and Residence Life/Housing and Academic Assistance and Student Involvement. For this item, Residence Life/Housing produced the highest mean, while Academic Assistance produced the lowest. For the most part, with the exception of this one individual competency item, entry-level practitioners who worked in different functional areas found no difference in the degree of importance of the competencies within this cluster.

Leadership and Management/Administration

Resource Management

As mentioned previously, the SCPC Leadership and Management/Administration cluster was divided into four subcompetency areas. Within the Resource Management subcompetency area, one of the two factor variables (which together accounted for all five individual competency items within this subcompetency area), Operational Management, indicated significant differences between Academic Assistance and Residence Life/Housing, Academic Assistance and Student Involvement, Academic Assistance and Other Student Affairs, Residence Life/Housing and Other Student Affairs, and Student Involvement and Other Student Affairs. Those who worked in Academic Assistance, which produced the lowest mean, differed from the three other recoded functional areas regarding the degree of importance of this factor. For the most part, as a result of this factor variable, which accounted for three individual competency items, entry-level practitioners who worked in different functional areas found a difference in the degree of importance of the competencies within this subcompetency area.

Human Resources

Within the Human Resources subcompetency area, both factor variables (which together accounted for six of seven individual competency items within this subcompetency area) indicated significant differences. First, Managing Interpersonal Relations indicated significant differences between Academic Assistance and Residence Life/Housing, Academic Assistance and Student Involvement, and Academic Assistance and Other Student Affairs. Those who worked in Academic Assistance, which produced

the lowest mean, differed from the three other recoded functional areas regarding the degree of importance of this factor. Second, Hiring Practices indicated significant differences between Academic Assistance and Residence Life/Housing, Academic Assistance and Student Involvement, Residence Life/Housing and Other Student Affairs, and Residence Life/Housing and Student Involvement. Those who worked in Residence Life/Housing, which produced the highest mean, differed from the three other recoded functional areas regarding the degree of importance of this factor. Finally, the individual competency item removed from factor analysis, "Ability to use basic supervision techniques within my work setting," indicated significant mean differences between Academic Assistance and Residence Life/Housing, Academic Assistance and Student Involvement, Academic Assistance and Other Student Affairs, and Residence Life/Housing and Other Student Affairs. Those who worked in Academic Assistance, which produced the lowest mean, differed from the three other recoded functional areas regarding the degree of importance of this individual item. As a result of all individual competency items being accounted for, it can be said that entry-level practitioners who worked in different functional areas found a difference in the degree of importance of the competencies within this subcompetency area.

Organizational Development

Within the Organizational Development subcompetency area, both factor variables (which together accounted for 8 of 10 individual competency items within this subcompetency area) indicated significant differences. First, Understanding of Organizational Environment indicated significant differences between Academic

Assistance (which produced the lowest mean) and Student Involvement (which produced the highest mean). Second, Creating and Meeting Work Objectives indicated significant differences between Residence Life/Housing (which produced the lowest mean) and Student Involvement (which produced the highest mean). One of the two individual competency items removed from factor analysis, "Understanding of a variety of leadership styles (e.g., symbolic, expert, inspirational, etc.)," indicated significant differences between Academic Assistance (which produced the lowest mean) and Student Involvement (which produced the highest mean). For the most part, with the exception of the other individual competency item, entry-level practitioners who worked in different functional areas found a difference in the degree of importance of the competencies within this subcompetency area.

Social Responsibility/Civic Engagement

Within the Social Responsibility/Civic Engagement subcompetency area, the factor variable (Community Awareness and Engagement, which accounted for four of five individual competency items within this subcompetency area) indicated significant differences between Residence Life/Housing and Student Involvement (which produced the highest mean). The individual competency item removed from factor analysis did not indicate significant mean differences. For the most part, with the exception of this one individual competency item, entry-level practitioners who worked in different functional areas found a difference in the degree of importance of the competencies within this subcompetency area.

Teaching

Within the SCPC Teaching cluster, the factor variable (Teaching/Training and Enabling Learning, which accounted for all five individual competency items), indicated significant differences between Academic Assistance and Residence Life/Housing, Academic Assistance and Student Involvement, and Academic Assistance and Other Student Affairs. Those who worked in Academic Assistance differed from the three other recoded functional areas regarding the degree of importance of this factor. Academic Assistance produced the lowest mean (although respondents still considered this factor to be "somewhat important"). As a result of all individual competency items being accounted for, it could be said that entry-level practitioners who worked in different functional areas found a difference in the degree of importance of the competencies within this subcompetency area.

Student Learning and Development

Within the SCPC Student Learning and Development cluster, the factor variable (Knowledge of Student Development Theory) accounted for all five individual competency items. This factor did not indicate significant differences between recoded functional area. Therefore, entry-level practitioners who worked in different functional areas found no difference in the degree of importance of the competencies within this cluster.

Assessment, Evaluation, and Research

Within the SCPC Assessment, Evaluation, and Research cluster, the factor variable (Research, Assessment, and Evaluation, which accounted for six of nine

individual competency items), indicated significant differences between Residence Life/Housing (which produced the lowest mean) and Student Involvement (which produced the highest mean). Two of the three individual competency items removed from factor analysis indicated significant differences. First, "Ability to correctly interpret data collected for assessment/evaluation/research" indicated significant differences between Residence Life/Housing and Other Student Affairs, which produced the highest mean. Second, "Ability to interpret and use results of assessment/evaluation/research" indicated significant differences between Academic Assistance and Other Student Affairs and Residence Life/Housing and Other Student Affairs, which again produced the highest mean. For the most part, with the exception of the third individual competency item, entry-level practitioners who worked in different functional areas found a difference in the degree of importance of the competencies within this cluster.

Ethics

Within the SCPC Ethics cluster, one of the two factor variables (which together accounted for five of six individual competency items), Ethical Practice, indicated significant differences between recoded functional areas, although post hoc tests did not indicate which groups provided for the difference. Within this factor variable, Other Student Affairs and Student Involvement produced the highest means, while Academic Assistance produced the lowest. The individual competency item removed from factor analysis did not indicate significant mean differences between groups. For the most part, with the exception of the factor variable that accounted for two individual competency

items, entry-level practitioners who worked in different functional areas found no difference in the degree of importance of the competencies within this cluster.

Legal Foundations

Within the SCPC Legal Foundations cluster, the factor variable (Knowledge of Legal Concepts and Their Application, which accounted for six of seven individual competency items), indicated significant differences between Academic Assistance and Residence Life/Housing, Academic Assistance and Student Involvement, Academic Assistance and Other Student Affairs, and Residence Life/Housing and Student Involvement. Those who worked in Academic Assistance, which produced the lowest mean, differed from the three other recoded functional areas regarding the degree of importance of this factor. The individual competency item removed from factor analysis did not indicate significant mean differences. For the most part, with the exception of this one individual competency item, entry-level practitioners who worked in different functional areas found a difference in the degree of importance of the competencies within this cluster.

Summary

Of the 16 factor variables, 10 indicated statistically significant mean differences based on the four recoded functional areas, and of the 15 individual competency items removed from factor analyses, 7 indicated statistically significant mean differences. Despite this relatively high representation, the researcher found it interesting that functional area did not produce at least a few additional significant differences for factor variables and/or removed competency items. With only a few exceptions, when a factor

variable or individual competency item indicated significantly mean differences between groups, it was found that respondents in Academic Assistance produced the lowest mean for that factor variable or competency item, compared to respondents in the remaining three recoded functional areas.

Compared to other demographic items, recoded functional area by far indicated the most significant differences between groups. Each recoded functional area serves a unique purpose (with the exception of Other Student Affairs, which is a combination of a multitude of individual functional areas) and requires the performance of unique tasks specific to that functional area. As a result, it makes sense that these areas would rely on different competencies to perform those tasks successfully. The finding that different competencies are needed by different functional areas is corroborated by the studies of Foley (1989), Saidla (1990), and Robertson (1999).

Research Question 3

What difference, if any, exists in the degree to which the competencies are important for work in entry-level positions, according to entry-level practitioners who work in different institutional types?

Within the SCPC Advising and Helping; Student Learning and Development; Pluralism and Inclusion; Ethics; Assessment, Evaluation, and Research; and Teaching clusters, no factor variable or individual competency item removed from factor analysis indicated significant differences between the two respondent institutional types (i.e., four-year public and four-year private). Therefore, entry-level practitioners who worked at

either type of institution found no difference in the degree of importance of the competencies within these six SCPC clusters.

As mentioned previously, the SCPC Leadership and Management/Administration cluster is divided into four subcompetency areas. Within the Resource Management, Human Resources, and Social Responsibility/Civic Engagement subcompetency areas, no factor variable or individual competency item removed from factor analysis indicated significant differences between institutional type. Therefore, entry-level practitioners who worked at either type of institution found no difference in the degree of importance of the competencies within these three subcompetency areas.

Within the Organizational Development subcompetency area, however, one of the two factor variables (which together accounted for 8 of 10 individual competency items within this subcompetency area), Understanding of Organizational Environment, indicated a significant difference between four-year public and four-year private institutions, with the latter indicating a higher level of importance. Neither of the individual competency items removed from factor analysis indicated significant mean differences. As a result of the aforementioned factor variable accounting for only five individual competency items, the researcher could not say, one way or another, that entry-level practitioners who worked at either type of institution found a difference in the degree of importance of the competencies in this subcompetency area. They did specifically seem to have a difference in the belief of the importance of knowing politics, organizational hierarchy, institutional governance, and culture.

Within the SCPC Legal Foundations cluster, the factor variable (Knowledge of Legal Concepts and Their Application, which accounted for six of seven individual

competency items) did not indicate significant differences between institutional type. However, the individual competency item removed from factor analysis, "Understanding of the legal differences between public and private institutions of higher education," indicated a significant mean difference between four-year public and four-year private institutions, with the latter indicating a higher level of importance. For the most part, with the exception of this one individual competency item, entry-level practitioners who worked at different institutional types found no difference in the degree of importance of the competencies within this cluster.

Of the 16 factor variables, only 1 indicated statistically significant mean differences based on institutional type, and of the 15 individual competency items removed from factor analyses, only 1 indicated statistically significant mean differences. To the researcher's surprise, this study found very few significant differences in the degree of importance of competencies based on respondent institutional type. Whether respondents worked at a four-year public or four-year private institution, they mostly believed that the competencies were important to their work to the same degree. This makes sense, as many of the tasks and functions of the field covered by these competencies (e.g., advising, communication, working with diverse groups, ethical decision-making, assessment, and supervision) are standard within the field, regardless of whether one works for a four-year public institution or private institution. However, certain characteristics of work at different types of institutions, including special legal issues and organizational environment, would lead to the need to perform unique tasks specific to the institution. As a result, it seems reasonable that practitioners at different institutional types would rely on different competencies to perform those tasks

successfully. That some different competencies may be needed at different types of institutions is corroborated by Foley (1989), although it should be noted that she compared community college to four-year institutions, and Hirt (2006).

Significant Findings

It is significant to note that all 75 studied competencies were found to be minimally "somewhat important" for entry-level student affairs work; 66 were found to be minimally "important;" 20 were found to be "very important." This confirms not only that the SCPC was correct in including these "basic" competencies as important (at least "somewhat") for work in the field, but also that entry-level practitioners need a wide array of competencies to perform the responsibilities within their positions.

Competencies related to advising and helping others, including students and colleagues, were rated the highest. While it is challenging to compare this finding to other studies due to lack of consistency in competency wording and scale of importance from one study to the next, it is apparent that these types of competencies have previously been found to be essential for entry-level student affairs work (Burkard, Cole, Ott, & Stoflet, 2005; Foley, 1989; Hyman, 1983/1988; Newton & Richardson, 1976; Ostroth, 1979/1981; Robertson, 1999; Saidla, 1990; Waple, 2000/2006). As mentioned previously, developing students is the basic foundation for the mission of student affairs, so that these types of competencies were most important was no surprise.

Competencies related to the legal foundations of the field were rated the lowest, yet still minimally "somewhat important." Again, based on the inconsistency from study to study, it was difficult to corroborate these findings. While other studies have

seemingly indicated a higher level of importance for the knowledge of legal issues, these competencies have generally been found to be less important than basic advising and helping-type competencies (Robertson, 1999; Saidla, 1990; Waple, 2000/2006). It would seem necessary to have rudimentary knowledge of this area; however, it appeared that entry-level practitioners in this study either did not deal with legal matters in their day-to-day work or that they utilized the resources available to them (e.g., supervisor and/or university attorney) to resolve these issues.

Perhaps one of the most important findings of the study was just how few significant differences were found overall between the groups within the studied demographic variables and the degree of importance of the SCPC competencies which were accounted for within factor variables and individual items removed from factor analysis. In fact, one demographic variable, years in the field, produced no significant differences between groups, for all 75 competencies. Several, including years in the position, institutional enrollment, gender, and highest degree earned, produced only a few significant differences between groups, for only a few competencies. This could be explained by the possibility that participants provided responses that they believed were more socially acceptable, thereby not recording their true perceptions of the importance of specific competencies for their current positions. On the other hand, this could indicate that, overall, entry-level practitioners, regardless of their personal or work characteristics, believed that the studied competencies were just as important or unimportant as their peers.

The demographic variable for which entry-level practitioners did not necessarily agree on the degree of importance of competencies was functional area. Functional area

by far produced the most significant mean differences between groups (i.e., Academic Assistance, Residence Life/Housing, Student Involvement, and Other Student Affairs), accounting for 47 of the 75 competencies. As a result, it could be said that entry-level practitioners separated by functional area differed in the degree of importance of more than 60% of the studied competencies. Specifically, when significant differences were indicated for a factor variable or removed competency item, respondents in Academic Assistance typically produced the lowest means. In other words, those entry-level practitioners in Academic Assistance believed the SCPC competencies to be less important than their peers in other functional areas.

Implications for Practice

Competency Models for the Field

One of the potential outcomes of this study was the ability to validate, at least for entry-level positions, many of the competencies in the 2007 SCPC *Professional Competencies* report. That all competencies studied were rated at least "somewhat important" speaks to the overall utility of the report (specifically, the *basic* competencies within it), although that they were not all rated "important," "very important," or "extremely important" serves as a reminder that not only is it difficult to create a practical list of competencies that is applicable to everyone, but also that research-based support (i.e., based on formal feedback from current practitioners), in addition to subject matter expert opinion, is helpful in creating a valid and useful list.

During the time period in which this study was conducted, ACPA and the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) began discussing

competencies and standards of the profession as a whole, the result of which could be a stronger list of competencies supported by the two largest comprehensive student affairs professional associations. The results of this study could help the associations determine which of the SCPC competencies to include in their combined listing, at least for entry-level professionals.

As mentioned in chapter 1, Spencer and Spencer (1993), via their iceberg model and definition of *competency*, suggested five characteristics (i.e., skills, knowledge, motives, self-concepts, and traits) that should comprise a competency model, such as that in the *Professional Competencies* report. In the report, skills and knowledge were the most prominent characteristics present within the model. In fact, there were no motives or traits, and very few self-concepts. Based on the researcher's review of the student affairs competency literature (both entry-level and field as a whole), it is clear that previous competency work has rarely focused on motives, traits, and self-concepts. Within the field, though, there must be certain innate qualities (e.g., compassion for others, the way a person reacts in an emergency situation, extraversion) that make some entry-level practitioners more successful than others. As discussed in chapter 1, these are the characteristics that are more difficult to conceptualize, define, identify, and assess, and yet these are the characteristics that are needed to move beyond the superficial view of competency that currently exists with skills and knowledge. These are the characteristics that need to be studied more thoroughly. With the creation of a new list, then, comes the opportunity for the associations representing the field of student affairs, namely ACPA and NASPA, to connect to the competency-experienced disciplines of "human development, developmental psychology, organizational behavior, counseling

psychology, and sociology" (McEwen, 2003, p. 155). For while student affairs has, over time, gained a theoretical backbone on which to base its existence, as a fairly young field, it has much to gain from the work of other disciplines and professions. As practitioners and scholars alike have questioned student affairs' status as a profession, perhaps the connection to existing competency research in true professions would allow the field to take one step closer towards professionalization and acceptability within higher education. The field of student affairs has a lot of work to do in creating and validating competencies for its workers, and as the associations undertake these issues, they should incorporate the human resources literature regarding competencies in order to develop a comprehensive competency model.

Next, it became clear in the current study that functional area, and to a smaller extent institutional type (accounting for four-year institutions only), required the use of different competencies. Once the comprehensive list is complete, other associations which focus on functional area (e.g., Association of College and University Housing Officers- International, National Association for Campus Activities, and National Orientation Directors Association) or institutional type (e.g., American Association of Community Colleges and Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities) should take the list and tailor it to meet the competency needs of their specific constituents, preferably based on management level. An ideal future for the field would include the creation of competency models for a combination of characteristics (e.g., functional area, institutional type, management level, and perhaps even institutional size). For example, it would be helpful to select and/or train an employee for specific competencies found to be important for an entry-level housing and residence life position at small private four-year

institution, because these competencies are likely different for an entry-level academic advising position at a large public two-year institution.

Human Resources Applications

Results could also be helpful within the realm of human resources applications, including training (e.g., via graduate preparation programs), professional development, and selection. Regarding graduate preparation programs, much can be said about the utility of these results. Within any student affairs graduate preparation program, students are likely to have a variety of preferences for the functional areas in which they desire to work upon graduation. Based on the fact that functional area produced the most significant mean differences between groups (i.e., Academic Assistance, Residence Life/Housing, Student Involvement, and Other Student Affairs), it seems that preparation for the specific competency needs of the functional areas should take priority within program curricula. This is, of course, easier said than done. It leaves faculty members in a bind, needing to efficiently prepare all students for their first jobs. It would be extremely difficult for faculty members to tailor their curricula to meet the needs of every member of the program, accommodating their functional area (and other) interests. As a result, faculty members are likely more prone to teach the generic competency items that are, overall, important for *all* entry-level practitioners. In order to provide their students with the training they will need to perform the tasks within their first jobs, then, faculty members need to take the extra step to bridge the gap between classroom and practical experience. Since most of the students within these preparation programs have assistantships, practica, and/or internships, faculty members must reach out to the

supervisors of these experiential opportunities and request their assistance in teaching functional area-specific competencies. Programs for which faculty members take this extra step will graduate student affairs practitioners who are more adequately prepared to perform successfully in their first positions. This is not to say that students in these programs should not be taught subjects that were not included as competencies or that were not rated as highly as others in this study. For example, there will always be certain subjects (e.g., history of higher education, legal foundations) that, while they may not be highly utilized on the job, should still be taught in these programs in order to build a foundation of the field of student affairs.

Another implication for practice that arises from the outcome of this study relates to professional development, which can help current entry-level practitioners master specific competencies deemed important to their job responsibilities. This could be particularly useful for those entry-level practitioners who do not have a degree in a student affairs or related area. The results of this study can guide professional development for entry-level practitioners, whether that be at the office, institutional student affairs division, or profession-wide (e.g., associational conference) level. Regardless, those in charge of planning professional development should be especially cognizant of this study's findings that entry-level competencies differ by functional area. Within an institution, for example, it makes sense, both from a money and time savings perspective, to provide professional development at the student affairs division level. And while this may be useful at times, it may not make sense in other instances to train student activities and financial aid practitioners similarly.

Finally, in terms of the application and selection process, these results are useful from two perspectives. From the employer perspective, student affairs practitioners with an understanding of the competencies needed for entry-level work can select the candidates who are in possession of these competencies (i.e., find person-job fit) or at the very least, know that they can train for them. From the potential employee (i.e., candidate) perspective, those with an understanding of the competencies needed for entry-level work can be more purposeful in searching for and selecting positions for which they actually possess these competencies, especially with regard to functional area.

Recommendations for Future Research

Based on the researcher's experience, several recommendations for future research can be made. As mentioned in chapter 3, the researcher studied only those competencies in the *basic* skill level in the *Professional Competencies* report, leaving 76 *intermediate* and 61 *advanced* competencies unstudied. It would be interesting to know which of these, if any, are also important for practitioners in entry-level positions as a whole, as well as by functional area and institutional type.

The researcher studied only the perspectives of those defined to be serving in entry-level positions. As mentioned in chapter 1, preparation program faculty members and professionals in different management levels may differ in their perceptions of competencies important for entry-level work (Saidla, 1990), perhaps as a result of their personal experience and/or time removed from serving in an entry-level position. As a result, it would be valuable to know which of the competencies mid-level practitioners,

upper-level practitioners, and preparation program faculty members believe are important for work in entry-level positions, and if there is a difference in their perspectives.

A longitudinal study of a smaller sample of entry-level practitioners could provide information regarding how the level of importance of the competencies changes from one year to the next. While this type of study would be challenging for dissertation research, it would nonetheless be interesting to see how a practitioner's viewpoint changed as his or her experience in the field increased.

Next, the researcher studied only those serving in entry-level positions. As such, the results are only applicable to understanding the competencies important for work in these positions. To the researcher's knowledge, no other studies have, to date, been completed utilizing the *Professional Competencies* report. It would therefore be valuable to know which of the competencies are believed to be important for work in mid- and upper-level student affairs positions, by asking those in these respective positions.

In addition to determining the *importance* of a select set of competencies, several previous studies (Domeier, 1977; Foley, 1989; Henry, 1985; Kuk, Cobb, & Forrest, 2007; Waple, 2000) have also determined the degree to which respondents believe they *possess* competencies and/or where the respondents learned them. While the scope of this study did not include these determinations, this type of information would be helpful as it relates to training and could be covered in a future study.

For future research, one could also determine how often these competencies are utilized. Some competencies might be used on a daily basis (e.g., those within the Advising and Helping cluster), while some might only be used on occasion (e.g., those in

the Legal Foundations cluster). Understanding how often they are utilized might be useful in determining which should be given priority in teaching or learning them.

The researcher did not intend to study only four-year institutions; however, only practitioners from these institutions, both public and private, responded. Two-year institutions were not represented in this study. In addition, there were no practitioners representing historically black colleges or universities and relatively few representing Hispanic-serving institutions and women's institutions. As a result, these institutions should be the focus of future studies, as there was no statistical support produced that indicated that the same competencies were important for those working at these types of institutions.

Next, as mentioned in Implications for Practice, skills and knowledge were the most prominent characteristics present within the *Professional Competencies* model. In order to create a comprehensive competency model for the field, one that is supported by the research-rich human resources competency literature, additional research should be done on the motives, traits, and self-concepts needed to perform the tasks of an entry-level position. Only then can the field attain a holistic view (including knowledge, skill, *and* personality) of "fit," finding the right people to provide student services.

Finally, qualitative research should be completed on this topic. Within the current study, it was impossible to determine the rationale behind participant responses. In a qualitative study, follow-up questions may be asked (e.g., regarding why he or she thinks a competency is "extremely important" or why he or she thinks one competency is more important than another), thus eliciting further information regarding the importance, from a subjective (i.e., un-rated) perspective. This would provide richer information regarding

the studied competencies and would likely also bring additional competencies to light. A qualitative study might be particularly helpful for discovering the competencies connected to deeper personality characteristics, the aforementioned motives, traits, and self-concepts that are helpful for performing job responsibilities within entry-level student affairs positions.

Conclusion

All 75 competencies examined in this study were found to be, minimally, "somewhat important" by those working in entry-level positions. It is clear then that these practitioners had a wide range of areas in which they need to be competent. Those competencies related to advising and helping others were found to be most important for practitioners working in entry-level positions, while those related to legal understanding were found to be least important.

For the most part, very few demographic variables indicated that there were significant differences in the degree of importance of competencies, between groups within those demographic variables. The exception to this was functional area, which means that the degree of importance of certain competencies varied based on the functional area in which a practitioner worked.

Discussing competencies for student affairs practitioners, and specifically entry-level practitioners, is continuously timely. That ACPA and NASPA joined together to create the Joint Task Force on Professional Competencies and Standards during the time period in which this study was conducted supports this point. While the collective research and literature of the past has provided some valuable information, much of

which is still applicable today, institutions of higher education change over time, thus requiring a reexamination of the competencies that will assist student affairs professionals in fulfilling their mission of providing student services and developing students in extracurricular settings.

As mentioned previously, the field of student affairs has a lot of work to do in creating and validating competencies, and as the associations undertake these issues, they should incorporate human resources competency literature to aid in the development of a comprehensive competency model for the field. In this way, perhaps the competency literature would gain some needed consistency and begin to not only inform student affairs practice, including selection and professional development, but also to fuel debate related to professionalization and certification for the field.

APPENDIX A: PERMISSION TO REPRINT ICEBERG MODEL

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A05_City: Winter Springs
A06_State: FL
A07_Zip: 32708
A08_Country: USA
A09_Contact_Phone_Number: 407-451-8005
A10_Fax: 407-823-5899
A11_Emails: ccoffey@mail.ucf.edu
A12_Reference:
A13_Book_Title: Competence at Work: Models for Superior Performance
A40_Book_or_Journal: Book
A14_Book_Author: L. M. Spencer & S. M. Spencer
A15_Book_ISBN: 0-471-54809-X
A16_Journal_Month:
A17_Journal_Year:
A18_Journal_Volume:
A19_Journal_Issue_Number:
A20_Copy_Pages: Table 2-1 on p. 11
A21_Maximum_Copies: 5 copies
A22_Your_Publisher: University of Central Florida
A23_Your_Title: IMPORTANT COMPETENCIES FOR ENTRY-LEVEL STUDENT AFFAIRS IN HIGHER EDUCATION POSITIONS
A24_Publication_Date: Summer 2010
A25_Format: print,Other
A41_Ebook_Reader_Type:
A26_If_WWW_URL:
A27_If_WWW_From_Adopted_Book:
A28_If_WWW_Password_Access:
A45_WWW_Users:
A29_If_WWW_Material_Posted_From:
A30_If_WWW_Material_Posted_To:
A42_If_Intranet_URL:
A32_If_Intranet_From_Adopted_Book:
A33_If_Intranet_Password_Access:
A48_Intranet_Users:
A34_If_Intranet_Material_Posted_From:
A35_If_Intranet_Material_Posted_To:
A50_If_Software_Print_Type:
A60_If_Other_Type: I assume it will be available to students when they do an electronic search through library databases (e.g., ProQuest)
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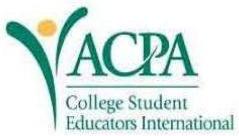
APPENDIX B: 2007 ACPA SCPC PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCIES REPORT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Central to the substance and structure of our professional development initiatives are the ACPA Professional Competencies. The complete report of the Steering Committee on Professional Competencies can be found at: http://www.myacpa.org.

Professional Competencies

Advising and Helping: Application of theories and skills related to providing support, direction, feedback, critique, and guidance to individuals and groups.

Assessment, Evaluation, and Research: The design and implementation of quantitative and qualitative techniques and tools focused on student learning and satisfaction, organizational issues and development, professional development and training, student development, and other emergent issues.

Ethics: The ability to assess daily activities from an ethical perspective as well as understanding and applying ethical standards to one's work.

Legal Foundations: The ability to assess daily activities from a legal perspective as well understanding and applying knowledge of legal issues to one's work environment and relationships.

Leadership and Management/Administration: Organizational competencies such as influencing, motivating, and enabling others to contribute toward the effectiveness and success of the organizations of which they are members; and the deployment and manipulation of resources to advance institutional or organizational mission, goals, and initiatives.

Pluralism and Inclusion: An understanding and valuing of diverse groups and views, civic engagement and social responsibility, as well as recognizing the importance of language and culture in pursuit of creating and maintaining more pluralistic and multicultural campuses.

Student Learning and Development: Knowledge and understanding of concepts and principles of student development and student learning theories, and ability to apply theory to improve student affairs practice.

Teaching: Knowledge and understanding of concepts and principles of teaching, learning, and training theory and how to apply these theories to improve student affairs practice and education.

Competencies adapted from ACPA Steering Committee on Professional Competencies (Report, July 2007).

APPENDIX C: SUMMARY OF ENTRY-LEVEL COMPETENCY LITERATURE

Table 38 Chronology of Entry-Level Competency Literature

Literature	Year	Source of competencies	Quantity studied	Clusters	Population	Who surveyed	Additional outcomes
Newton & Richardson	1976	Delphi method	40		Georgia student affairs professionals	All management levels	
Domeier	1977	Literature review	58	Budget Management, Cooperative Relationships, Communication, Leadership, Personnel Management, Professional Development, Research and Evaluation, and Student Contact	Michigan student affairs professionals	All management levels	
Ostroth	1979/ 1981	Minetti (1977)	36		Contacts for entry-level position listings in 1978	All management levels	
Hyman	1983/ 1988	Domeier (1977), Hanson (1977), Minetti (1977)	33	Goal-Setting, Consultation, Communication, Assessment and Evaluation, and Environmental and Organizational Management	Student affairs professionals	SSAOs, directors of housing, and faculty	
Foley	1989	Literature review and suggestions from ACPA leadership	64	Counseling and Consultation, Management, Academic Support, Research, Societal Issues, Program Development, and Higher Education	Student affairs professionals	All management levels	Determined competencies needed for institutional types and functional areas
ACPA/ NASPA TFPPP	1990	Feedback from "notable" practitioners and faculty	8				
Saidla	1990	Feedback from practitioners responsible for hiring and Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs	20		Professionals in the Division of Student Affairs at a large state university in southeast US	All management levels	Determined competencies needed for functional areas

Literature	Year	Source of competencies	Quantity studied	Clusters	Population	Who surveyed	Additional outcomes
Young & Coldwell	1993	ACPA/ NASPA TFPPP (1990)	10		Arizona, Kansas, Massachusetts, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Washington student affairs professionals	All management levels	
Robertson	1999	Minetti (1977)	46	Human Relations and Interpersonal Skills, Administration and Management, Research and Assessment, Historical and Philosophical Foundations, Meeting Student Needs, and Professional Purpose and Role Identity	Eighteen graduate preparation programs	Recent graduates and their supervisors	Determined competencies needed for functional areas
Waple	2000/ 2006	Literature review	28	Foundational Studies; Theoretical Studies; Technological Skills; Organization and Administration of Student Affairs; Helping and Communication Skills; Practical Work; and Assessment, Evaluation and Research	Student affairs professionals	Entry-level	
Burkard, Cole, Ott, & Stoflet	2005	Delphi method	32	Human Relations Skills, Personal/Professional Qualities, Administrative/Management, Research, and Technology	Student affairs professionals	Mid-level and upper-level	
Cuyjet, Longwell-Grice, & Molina	2009	CAS (2006)	22		Eleven graduate preparation programs	Recent graduates and their supervisors	

Note. This chart summarizes literature whose purpose included a description of competencies utilized or the determination of the importance of or need for competencies in entry-level positions.

APPENDIX D: ENTRY-LEVEL COMPETENCIES CITED IN THE LITERATURE

Table 39 Entry-Level Competencies Cited in the Literature

	Newton & Richardson	Domeier	Ostroth	Hyman	Foley	ACPA/ NASPA TFPPP	Saidla	Young & Coldwell	Robertson	Waple	Burkard, Cole, Ott, & Stoflet	Cuyjet, Longwell-Grice, & Molina
Interpersonal relationships[a]	*		*		*						*	
Work cooperatively with others	*		*						*		*	
Counseling	*						*				*	
Communication (oral or written)[a]			*				*		*	*	*	
Advise groups or organizations			*							*		
Referral skills[a]				*	*							
Problem solving[a]				*						*	*	
Give presentations				*						*		
Decision making[a]			*	*					*			
Budgeting/fiscal management[a]		*		*		*				*		
Technology[a]						*				*		
Own professional development		*					*					*
Conflict resolution[a]			*	*	*					*		
Staffing issues (supervision, training, etc.)[a]		*		*	*		*			*		*
Leadership[a]			*		*		*			*		*

	Newton & Richardson	Domeier	Ostroth	Hyman	Foley	ACPA/ NASPA TFPPP	Saidla	Young & Coldwell	Robertson	Waple	Burkard, Cole, Ott, & Stoflet	Cuyjet, Longwell-Grice, & Molina
Organization, administration, or management[a]	*				*	*	*			*		*
Crisis management					*					*		
Understanding institutional mission				*					*			
Public relations					*					*		
Self-awareness	*				*							
Work with diverse populations			*	*					*			*
Multicultural competence[a]						*	*	*		*	*	
Multicultural development issues[a]									*			*
Theory to practice	*						*					
Student development theory[a]		*				*	*			*		*
Impact of college on development									*			*
Programming				*	*		*			*	*	

	Newton & Richardson	Domeier	Ostroth	Hyman	Foley	ACPA/ NASPA TFPPP	Saidla	Young & Coldwell	Robertson	Waple	Burkard, Cole, Ott, & Stoflet	Cuyjet, Longwell-Grice, & Molina
Program evaluation[a]				*						*		
Research, assessment, evaluation[a]		*		*		*						
Assess student needs/issues			*	*					*			
Legal issues[a]							*			*		*
Professional ethics[a]		*		*	*		*		*	*		*

Note. This chart is based on the literature summarized in Appendix C. The researcher reviewed the literature to extract only the competencies determined to be the *most* important/needed/used within a specific piece of literature. All competencies that were mentioned in at least two pieces of literature as *most* important/needed/used are listed in this chart. Several competencies have been paraphrased to assist with the lack of consistency in wording from one piece of literature to the next.

[a]Addressed as a "basic" competency in Steering Committee on Professional Competencies (2007). *Included as most used/most needed competency.

APPENDIX E: EXPERT PANEL MEMBER QUALIFICATIONS

Dr. Stan Carpenter is Professor and Chair of the Educational Administration and Psychological Services Department at Texas State University-San Marcos. He served as a member of the American College Personnel Association (ACPA) Steering Committee on Professional Competencies, which created the 2007 *Professional Competencies* report. He has previously served as the Executive Director of the Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE) as well as Directorate Board member of the ACPA Commission for Professional Preparation. As of 2010, he has given over 140 conference and invited presentations and written over 95 journal articles, book chapters, and other professional publications and reports. Dr. Carpenter's research and publication interests include professionalization, professional preparation, and scholarship. His dissertation, *The Professional Development of Student Affairs Workers: An Analysis*, won the Dissertation of the Year Award from the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) in 1981.

Dr. Charles Fey is the Vice President for Student Affairs and Ad Hoc Professor in the Educational Foundations and Leadership program at The University of Akron. He has almost 40 years of experience in the field and has been honored by ACPA numerous times for his service and commitment. Dr. Fey has served in a number of roles within state and national associations, including Trustee for the ACPA Foundation Board, Region II Vice President for NASPA, Board member of the ACPA Commission for Administrative Leadership, and President of both the Massachusetts College Personnel Association and Texas Association of College and University Student Personnel Administrators. His professional interests include mid-level managers, including their competencies and professional development. Since completing his dissertation, *Mid-level*

Student Affairs Administrators: A Study of Management Skills, he has contributed significantly, via both professional writings and presentations, to scholarship regarding mid-level issues within the field.

Dr. Darby Roberts is the Associate Director of Student Life Studies at Texas A&M University. Dr. Roberts has over 10 years of experience in assessment, evaluation, and strategic planning for a large, nationally recognized student affairs division. In addition, she serves as the editor of the NASPA NetResults assessment column and member of the NASPA Assessment, Evaluation, and Research Knowledge Community board. Dr. Roberts earned her doctorate from Texas A&M in 2003, completing her dissertation, *Skill Development among Student Affairs Professionals in the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators Region III*.

APPENDIX F: COMPETENCY QUESTIONNAIRE

Thank you for helping to shape the future of professional development for the field of student affairs. Please select a response for each of the following questions to determine if you meet the criteria to participate in this study.

*Indicates mandatory response.

1. ***Are you currently serving in a <u>full-time</u> position in the field of student affairs/services?** *Select one.*
   a. Yes
   b. No
2. ***How many years have you worked in your <u>current</u> full-time position?** *Select one.*
   a. More than 0 years but less than 1 year
   b. More than 1 year but less than 2 years
   c. More than 2 years but less than 3 years
   d. More than 3 years but less than 4 years
   e. More than 4 years but less than 5 years
   f. More than 5 years
3. ***How many years of <u>full-time</u> experience do you have in the field of student affairs/services?** Do <u>not</u> include graduate assistantships, practica, or internships; include <u>only</u> years in a full-time position. *Select one.*
   a. More than 0 years but less than 1 year
   b. More than 1 year but less than 2 years
   c. More than 2 years but less than 3 years
   d. More than 3 years but less than 4 years
   e. More than 4 years but less than 5 years
   f. More than 5 years
4. ***Do you supervise other full-time <u>professional</u> staff?** Professional staff does <u>not</u> include administrative assistant, secretarial, or support staff, graduate assistants, or student staff. *Select one.*
   a. Yes, I supervise other full-time professional staff
   b. No, I do not supervise other full-time professional staff
   c. Unsure
5. ***Finally, regarding work, do you consider yourself as serving in an entry-level student affairs/services position?**
   a. Yes
   b. No
      i. You have indicated that you do not feel that you serve in an entry-level position. **<u>Briefly</u> indicate why.** [COMMENT BOX]
   c. Unsure
      i. You have indicated that you are unsure if you serve in an entry-level position. **<u>Briefly</u> indicate why.** [COMMENT BOX]

You have met the criteria for participating in this study. Please note that ACPA has developed 8 groupings of competencies. This survey asks about individual competencies

in all 8 groupings. **As you respond, think about the skills and knowledge you need to perform the responsibilities of your <u>current</u> position.**

1 = not important or applicable to me in my current position
2 = somewhat important to me in my current position
3 = important to me in my current position
4 = very important to me in my current position
5 = extremely important to me in my current position

To what degree is each of the following competencies important or not important to you in your current position?

(1 of 8) Advising and Helping: Skills related to providing support, direction, feedback, critique, and guidance to individuals and groups.

1. Ability to listen actively (e.g., paraphrase, summarize, clarify) to students and colleagues
2. Ability to use appropriate nonverbal communication with students and colleagues
3. Ability to establish rapport with others (including students and colleagues)
4. Ability to work with students on multiple issues (e.g., academic, personal) simultaneously
5. Ability to help an individual in his/her decision making process
6. Ability to help an individual set goals
7. Ability to facilitate problem-solving
8. Ability to challenge students effectively
9. Ability to challenge colleagues effectively
10. Ability to encourage students and colleagues effectively
11. Ability to refer others to on- or off-campus resources (e.g., offices, outside agencies) when needed

Comments about this category? *Optional.*

(2 of 8) Student Learning and Development: Knowledge and understanding of concepts and principles of student development theory and ability to apply theory to improve and inform student affairs practice.

12. Knowledge of different <u>types</u> of theories (e.g., psychosocial and identity development, cognitive-structural)
13. Knowledge of various <u>learning</u> theories/models
14. Knowledge of how differences in individual characteristics (e.g., race, class, gender, age, sexual orientation, disability) can influence student development
15. Knowledge of my own development and how that influences my view of the development of others

16. Knowledge of how to use formal and informal student development theories to enhance my work with students

Comments about this category? *Optional.*

(3 of 8) Pluralism and Inclusion: Awareness, skills, and knowledge in multicultural competence, including an understanding of diverse groups and culture.

17. Ability to assess my level of multicultural awareness
18. Understanding of the impact of things such as culture, attitudes, values, beliefs, assumptions, biases, identity, heritage, and life experiences on my work
19. Ability to deconstruct assumptions and core beliefs about different cultures
20. Ability to expand my cultural skills and knowledge, especially related to specific cultural issues on my campus
21. Ability to facilitate dialogue between groups of different cultures, perspectives, and/or worldviews

Comments about this category? *Optional.*

(4 of 8) Ethics: Understanding and applying ethical standards to one's work.

22. Understanding of the ethical statements of ACPA and NASPA
23. Understanding of the ethical statements of other professional associations relevant to my work (e.g., NACA, ACUHO-I, NODA, SACSA, AACC)
24. Knowledge of the major ethical principles that serve as the foundation of these professional associations' ethical statements
25. Ability to act in accordance with the ethical statements of the profession
26. Ability to recognize ethical issues in the course of my job
27. Ability to use institutional resources (e.g., human resources, supervisor, institutional policies/procedures) to resolve ethical issues

Comments about this category? *Optional.*

Remember, if you cannot complete the survey in one sitting, you may come back to it later if you close this web browser and then click on the survey link sent in my email to you. When you click on the link in the email, it will take you to the survey page at which you previously exited.

(5 of 8) Leadership and Management/Administration: Student affairs work is conducted within the context of organizations. This cluster includes four sub-competencies.

(a) Resource Management

28. Ability to utilize facilities management procedures to operate a facility
29. Ability to utilize facilities management procedures to host an event/program in a facility
30. Knowledge of basic techniques for budget management/monitoring
31. Ability to use technology to maximize efficiency and effectiveness of my work
32. Understanding of environmentally friendly (i.e., "green") methods to complete my work

(b) Human Resources

33. Understanding of the basic principles that underlie conflict in organizations and student life
34. Understanding of how to facilitate conflict resolution
35. Knowledge of the fundamentals of teamwork and teambuilding
36. Ability to use basic motivational techniques with others (including students and staff)
37. Ability to use basic supervision techniques within my work setting
38. Understanding of appropriate hiring techniques
39. Knowledge of my institution's hiring policies, procedures, and processes

(c) Organizational Development

40. Knowledge of the process necessary for identifying organizational goals
41. Ability to organize and plan my work tasks within the context of institutional priorities
42. Ability to organize and plan my work tasks within the context of my individual performance objectives/goals
43. Understanding of my institution's cultural landscape (i.e., culture), including traditions and customs
44. Understanding of the organizational structure (i.e., hierarchy) of my institution
45. Understanding of how my institution is governed (i.e., institutional governance)
46. Understanding of the political landscape (i.e., politics) of my organization/institution, including factors (e.g., policies, hierarchy, goals, resource allocation processes) that influence others to act
47. Ability to implement change in my organization (i.e., knowing the process to get a policy approved, understanding the role of campus decision-makers in the change process, etc.)
48. Understanding of the values and processes that lead to organizational improvement
49. Understanding of a variety of leadership styles (e.g., symbolic, expert, inspirational, etc.)

(d) Social Responsibility/Civic Engagement

50. Knowledge of major public policy issues (e.g., national security, immigration, environmental protection, health care) and decisions at the national, state, and local levels
51. Knowledge of higher education issues (e.g., funding, student rights) at the national, state, and local levels
52. Knowledge of major policy issues and decisions on my campus
53. Belief in contributing to the well-being of communities (campus, local, professional, state, and/or national), even outside of my job description
54. Belief in the capacity of ordinary people to come together and take action to transform their communities

Comments about this category? *Optional.*

(6 of 8) Legal Foundations: Understanding and applying knowledge of legal issues to one's work environment and relationships.

55. Understanding of the legal differences between public and private institutions of higher education
56. Understanding of how the US Constitution influences the rights of students, faculty, and staff at public institutions
57. Knowledge of landmark civil rights, desegregation, and affirmative action case law that affects American higher education
58. Understanding of what torts and negligence are and how they affect professional practice
59. Understanding of contract law and how it affects professional practice
60. Knowledge of when to seek advice from campus legal counsel
61. Ability to consult with campus legal counsel

Comments about this category? *Optional.*

(7 of 8) Assessment, Evaluation, Research: The design and implementation of assessment, evaluation, and research methods focused on student learning and satisfaction, organizational issues and development, professional development and training, student development, and other emergent issues using both quantitative and qualitative techniques.

62. Ability to use professional literature to gain a better understanding of the effectiveness of programs and other initiatives
63. Ability to assess the quality of a study that uses qualitative methods
64. Ability to assess whether or how the findings of a qualitative study transfer to my current work setting

65. Ability to assess the quality of a study that uses quantitative methods, including validity and reliability
66. Understanding of the need to follow institutional/divisional policies regarding ethical assessment/evaluation/research
67. Ability to conduct program evaluations
68. Ability to facilitate data collection for assessment/evaluation
69. Ability to correctly interpret data collected for assessment/evaluation/research
70. Ability to interpret and use results of assessment/evaluation/research

Comments about this category? *Optional.*

(8 of 8) Teaching: Knowledge and understanding of concepts and principles of teaching, learning, and training theory and how to apply these theories to improve student affairs practice and education.

71. Ability to incorporate various learning theories/models into daily practice
72. Ability to construct learning outcomes for a program/initiative
73. Ability to shape the environment to ensure that learning outcomes are met
74. Ability to assess teaching/training effectiveness and if learning has occurred
75. Ability to incorporate the results of teaching, training, and learning assessment into my work

Comments about this category? *Optional.*

Thank you for your patience. This is the last set of questions.

1. **In your current position, what is your primary (i.e., main) functional area of work?** *Select one.*
   a. Academic Advising
   b. Admissions/Enrollment Management
   c. Career Planning/Placement/Services
   d. Counseling
   e. GLBTQ Awareness/Services
   f. Greek Affairs
   g. International Student Services
   h. Judicial Affairs
   i. Leadership Development
   j. Multicultural Affairs/Services
   k. Orientation/New Student Programs
   l. Recreational Sports/Services
   m. Residence Life/Housing
   n. Student Activities/Student Union
   o. Other [COMMENT BOX]

2. **At what type of institution do you currently work?** *Select one.*
    a. Four-year public
    b. Four-year private
    c. Two-year public
    d. Two-year private
    e. Other [COMMENT BOX]
3. **Can your institution be further classified as one of the following?** *Select <u>all</u> that apply.*
    a. Liberal arts institution
    b. Religiously affiliated institution
    c. Research university
    d. Historically black college or university
    e. Community college
    f. Hispanic-serving institution
    g. Women's institution
    h. Unsure / None of the above
4. **What is the approximate full-time student enrollment on your campus?** *Select one*.
    a. Under 1,000
    b. 1,000-2,499
    c. 2,500-4,999
    d. 5,000-9,999
    e. 10,000-14,999
    f. 15,000-19,999
    g. 20,000-29,999
    h. 30,000-39,999
    i. 40,000 and above
    j. Unsure / None of the above
5. **With what gender do you identify?** *Select one.*
    a. Male
    b. Female
    c. Transgender
    d. Prefer not to respond
6. **What is your approximate age?** *Select one.*
    a. Under 22
    b. 22-25
    c. 26-30
    d. 31-35
    e. 36-40
    f. 41-45
    g. 46-50
    h. Over 50
    i. Prefer not to respond

7. **What is the highest educational degree you have <u>earned</u>?** *Select one.*
    a. Associate
    b. Bachelor's
    c. Master's
    d. Doctorate
    e. Other [COMMENT BOX]
    f. Prefer not to respond
8. **Was at least one of your degrees in a student affairs, higher education, or related area?** *Select one.*
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. Prefer not to respond

Please share any comments you may have regarding competencies for entry-level positions in student affairs and/or this study. This is your final opportunity to provide feedback within this questionnaire. *Optional.* [COMMENT BOX]

APPENDIX G: ZOOMERANG WEB GREETING

ACPA
STANDING COMMITTEE FOR
Graduate Students
& New Professionals

University of
Central
Florida

NASPA | KNOWLEDGE COMMUNITY
NEW PROFESSIONALS AND GRADUATE STUDENTS

Importance of Competencies in Entry-Level Positions

Thank you for assisting with my dissertation study, which will elicit your perception on the importance, to you, of a list of competencies pulled from a 2007 ACPA report.

The questionnaire should take no more than 20 minutes to complete (the pilot study average was 16.5 minutes). If you cannot complete the survey in one sitting, you may come back to it later if you close the current web browser and then click on the survey link sent in my email to you. When you click on the link in the email, it will take you to the survey page at which you previously exited.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact me at ccoffey@knights.ucf.edu. I will send the survey results to all sample members upon the completion of my study. Thank you!

Christa Coffey

START SURVEY!

APPENDIX H: ZOOMERANG SCREEN-OUT END PAGE

ACPA
STANDING COMMITTEE FOR
Graduate Students
& New Professionals

University of
Central
Florida

NASPA | KNOWLEDGE COMMUNITY
NEW PROFESSIONALS AND GRADUATE STUDENTS

Thank you very much for your willingness to contribute to my dissertation and research in the field. However, participants must be classified as currently serving in 'entry-level' (as defined by the researcher) positions in order to provide feedback. While ACPA did provide the sample to me, those records are at times outdated. I apologize for the confusion, but thank you for responding anyway, as it helps with my non-response rates. If you feel like there has been a mistake or if you have any questions, suggestions, or comments, please contact me at ccoffey@knights.ucf.edu or (407) 451-8005. I will send the survey results to all sample members upon the completion of my study.

APPENDIX I: ZOOMERANG THANK YOU END PAGE

ACPA
STANDING COMMITTEE FOR
Graduate Students
& New Professionals

University of
Central
Florida

NASPA | KNOWLEDGE COMMUNITY
NEW PROFESSIONALS AND
GRADUATE STUDENTS

Thank you very much for your willingness to contribute to my dissertation and research in the field. If you have any questions, suggestions, or comments, please contact me at ccoffey@knights.ucf.edu or (407) 451-8005. I will send the survey results to all sample members upon the completion of my study.

APPENDIX J: PRE-NOTICE E-MAIL

A Study of Competencies Perceived to be Important by Professionals in Entry-Level Positions in College Student Affairs

Dear ACPA member:

In a few days you will receive, via e-mail, a request to complete an online questionnaire for a research study being conducted for my doctoral dissertation at the University of Central Florida (UCF). The study concerns student affairs professionals' perceptions of important competencies for entry-level positions, and is being supported by the new professional communities of both ACPA and NASPA.

As you probably know, student affairs has no standard profession-wide competencies, although ACPA, NASPA, and CAS have begun discussing a possible collaboration to determine such. The results of this study could assist the associations in the creation of a unified list of those competencies needed in entry-level positions.

While your participation is voluntary, I would greatly appreciate your response to the survey. With your help, we can shape the future of professional development for the field. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Christa Coffey
Assistant Director of Student Involvement
(407) 451-8005
ccoffey@knights.ucf.edu

P.S. The procedures of this study have been approved by the UCF Institutional Review Board. Please note that by completing the survey, you are consenting to the process and understand the nature of the study objectives.

APPENDIX K: COMPETENCY QUESTIONNAIRE E-MAIL

This e-mail was written in HTML format. If you see HTML code in the text below, change your e-mail view to HTML, as opposed to PLAIN TEXT or TEXT ONLY.

Dear Colleague,

I am writing as a follow-up to my recent e-mail to request your help in a dissertation study, which is being supported by the new professional committees of both ACPA and NASPA.

The study will determine the importance of competencies, based on ACPA's 2007 "Professional Competencies" document, for entry-level positions. **As the creation of a set of competencies is an emerging focus of ACPA, NASPA, and CAS, your participation is vital and beneficial to the profession as a whole.** Your feedback can influence future conversations about the subject.

Your answers will be kept confidential. Results will be used in my dissertation and released to ACPA and other interested parties without any personally identifying information. I hope you will share your perceptions in an effort to contribute to research in the field. As a benefit to you, I will provide the results of my study, so that you can see what others have selected as important competencies and then determine which ones you might like to develop.

Please complete the questionnaire at the link below my name by November 12. In the pilot study, the average completion time was 16.5 minutes. If clicking on the link below does not work, copy and paste the address into a web browser. If you decide not to respond, please click on the opt-out link at the end of the e-mail and I will not contact you again. If you have any questions or comments, please contact me at ccoffey@knights.ucf.edu. The study procedures have been approved by the University of Central Florida Institutional Review Board. Thank you!

Christa Coffey

P.S. Zoomerang will experience an outage on Thursday night (10/22) from 9pm to 3am EST. I apologize for the inconvenience.

APPENDIX L: COMPETENCY QUESTIONNAIRE REMINDER E-MAIL

This e-mail was written in HTML format. If you see HTML code in the text below, change your e-mail view to HTML, as opposed to PLAIN TEXT or TEXT ONLY.

Dear Colleague,

Last week, I e-mailed you the link to a questionnaire regarding student affairs competencies. This study is significant because it will serve as an attempt to identify the importance of competencies, based on ACPA's 2007 "Professional Competencies" document, for entry-level positions. This research supports the endeavor that ACPA, NASPA, and CAS are currently undertaking to identify competencies for the profession. **As such, your participation is needed and to the best of my knowledge, I have not yet received your response.**

I am writing again to encourage you to complete the questionnaire, so that the results are accurate. While I sent questionnaires to a sample of ACPA members, it is only by receiving surveys from almost everyone that I can ensure the sample is representative of the population.

As previously mentioned, the questionnaire should take approximately 17 minutes to complete, and your responses will be kept confidential. **Please complete the questionnaire by November 12.** If clicking on the link just below my signature line does not work, please copy and paste the address into your web browser. If you decide not to respond, please click on the opt-out link at the very end of this e-mail.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact me at (407) 451-8005 or ccoffey@knights.ucf.edu. Thank you for your help.

Christa Coffey
University of Central Florida

APPENDIX M: COMPETENCY QUESTIONNAIRE REMINDER 2 E-MAIL

This e-mail was written in HTML format. If you see HTML code in the text below, change your e-mail view to HTML, as opposed to PLAIN TEXT or TEXT ONLY.

Dear Colleague,

Over the past few weeks, I have e-mailed you about a study I am conducting for my dissertation, which is supported by the new professional communities of both ACPA and NASPA. The purpose is to determine the importance of competencies for entry-level practitioners.

There is only one week left to respond, and I really need your assistance. While participation is voluntary, I would greatly appreciate your response to the survey, at the link just below my name, by November 12. If clicking on the link does not work, please copy and paste the address into a web browser. If you decide not to respond, please click on the opt-out link at the very end of this e-mail, as even this will help with my non-response rates.

I appreciate your willingness to consider my request as I attempt to better understand competencies for entry-level professionals. If you have any questions, please contact me at (407) 451-8005 or ccoffey@knights.ucf.edu. Thank you for your help.

Christa Coffey

APPENDIX N: FINAL CONTACT E-MAIL

This e-mail was written in HTML format. If you see HTML code in the text below, change your e-mail view to HTML, as opposed to PLAIN TEXT or TEXT ONLY.

ACPA
STANDING COMMITTEE FOR
Graduate Students
& New Professionals

University of
Central
Florida

NASPA | KNOWLEDGE COMMUNITY
NEW PROFESSIONALS AND GRADUATE STUDENTS

Dear ACPA Colleague,

Over the past few weeks, I have e-mailed you about a study I am conducting for my dissertation, which is supported by the new professional communities of both ACPA and NASPA. **The purpose is to determine the importance of competencies for entry-level practitioners, and my hope is that it will contribute greatly to related discussions currently happening between NASPA and ACPA.**

This is the last contact that I will make with the ACPA members selected for the study. I am sending this final contact because of the concern that people who have not responded may have different perceptions than those who have. Hearing from everyone helps ensure that the results are representative of the population.

I would greatly appreciate your response to the survey, at the link just below my name, by 11pm EST this Thursday, November 12. If clicking on the link does not work, please copy and paste the address into a web browser. If you feel that I have made a mistake including you in the study, please e-mail me. This will be helpful as I compile the results. If you decide not to respond, please click on the opt-out link at the very end of this e-mail.

I appreciate your willingness to consider my request as I attempt to better understand competencies for entry-level professionals. If you have any questions, please contact me at (407) 451-8005 or ccoffey@knights.ucf.edu. Thank you for your help.

APPENDIX O: IRB APPROVAL LETTER OF EXEMPTION

University of Central Florida Institutional Review Board
Office of Research & Commercialization
12201 Research Parkway, Suite 501
Orlando, Florida 32826-3246
Telephone: 407-823-2901 or 407-882-2276
www.research.ucf.edu/compliance/irb.html

Approval of Exempt Human Research

From: **UCF Institutional Review Board #1**
FWA00000351, IRB00001138

To: **Christa Coffey**

Date: **October 05, 2009**

Dear Researcher:

On 10/5/2009, the IRB approved the following activity as human participant research that is exempt from regulation:

Type of Review:	Initial Review
Project Title:	A Study of Competencies Perceived to be Important by Professionals in Entry-Level Positions in College Student Affairs
Investigator:	Christa Coffey
IRB Number:	SBE-09-06433
Funding Agency:	None

This determination applies only to the activities described in the IRB submission and does not apply should any changes be made. If changes are made and there are questions about whether these changes affect the exempt status of the human research, please contact the IRB.

In the conduct of this research, you are responsible to follow the requirements of the Investigator Manual.

On behalf of Joseph Bielitzki, DVM, UCF IRB Chair, this letter is signed by:

Signature applied by Janice Turchin on 10/05/2009 09:04:20 AM EDT

Janice M Turchin

IRB Coordinator

APPENDIX P: SUPPORT LETTER FROM ACPA STANDING COMMITTEE ON GRADUATE STUDENTS AND NEW PROFESSIONALS

From: Danielle Morgan <danielleamorgan924@gmail.com>
To: Christa Coffey <ccoffey@mail.ucf.edu>
Date: 9/21/2009 1:36 PM
Subject: Re: Dissertation research on new professionals

Hi Christa,

With training and opening and the new academic year, so of this just got away from me - I apologize.

Thank you for getting in touch with me regarding your competency study. As Chair of ACPA's Standing Committee for Graduate Students and New Professionals, I am willing to give the support of the Standing Committee to your study. Let me know if you need anything. I know you have been talking to Vernon in the ACPA office about getting a sample, but if you also need access to our listserv, that offer still stands.

Again, let me know if there is any way I can help you, and good luck!

Danielle A. Morgan
Bowditch Hall Resident Director, Salem State College
Committee Chair, ACPA Standing Committee for Graduate Students & New Professionals
978.542.6427

APPENDIX Q: SUPPORT LETTER FROM NASPA NEW PROFESSIONALS AND GRADUATE STUDENTS KNOWLEDGE COMMUNITY

From: "Daniel Choi" <dc1245@nyu.edu>
To: ccoffey@mail.ucf.edu
Date: 7/9/2009 4:49 PM
Subject: NASPA NPGS Support for your study

Dear Christa,

Thank you for providing me with the details regarding your study of entry-level competencies. As the Chair of NASPA's New Professionals and Graduate Students Knowledge Community (KC), I believe this study will benefit not only the members of our KC, but the profession as a whole. As such, you have the support of the KC to complete this study. Please let me know how I can help you, whether it be sending the questionnaire to our listserv or just encouraging members to respond.

Best,

Daniel Choi

Chair, NASPA NPGS KC

APPENDIX R: LETTER TO ACPA STANDING COMMITTEE MAILING LIST

From: Danielle Morgan <danielleamorgan924@gmail.com>
To: SCGSNP Listserv <scgsnp_open@lyris.acpa.nche.edu>
CC: Christa Coffey <ccoffey@mail.ucf.edu>
Date: 10/20/2009 9:49 AM
Subject: Researcher Needs Your Help!

Good morning SCGSNP!

In a few days many of you will receive, via e-mail, a request from ACPA member Christa Coffey to complete an online questionnaire for a study being conducted for her doctoral dissertation. The study concerns perceptions of important competencies for entry-level positions, and is being supported by our Standing Committee. The competencies are based on the 2007 ACPA "Professional Competencies" document, which to this point have not been validated by entry-level professionals.

This might be a great opportunity for you to help out a fellow colleague, and help the field learn a little bit more about graduate students and new professionals so that groups like ACPA and SCGSNP are able to better serve your needs. Hopefully, we can then begin to see what competencies are important for entry-level student affairs professionals!

If you have any questions about the research, please contact Christa directly at ccoffey@mail.ucf.edu.

--
Danielle A. Morgan
Bowditch Hall Resident Director, Salem State College
Committee Chair, ACPA Standing Committee for Graduate Students & New Professionals
978.542.6427

APPENDIX S: SUPPORT LETTER FROM ACPA NATIONAL OFFICE

ACPA
College Student Educators International

July 13, 2009

Christa Coffey
Assistant Director of Student Involvement
UCF Office of Student Involvement
PO Box 163245
Orlando, FL 32816-3245

Dear Christa:

Thank you for contacting me about your study of entry-level professionals, based on the 2007 ACPA Steering Committee on Professional Competencies report, *Professional Competencies*. As you know, the professional standards of the field is always a timely topic, one that has been discussed in some form for several decades. This is especially true now, with ACPA, CAS, and NASPA entering the early stages of discussing competencies and professional standards, a result of which could be a stronger, multi-associational list of competencies for the profession as a whole.

In addition, ACPA has always supported new professional issues, including preparation, professional development, and training. As such, ACPA is willing to provide you with the e-mail list of all ACPA members who are currently classified as "entry-level." We can discuss the details of this when you get closer to sending out the questionnaire. As a reminder, the information provided is to be used only for this specific study, and all information (including the list and responses) should be kept confidential.

Please keep me posted on your progress. Good luck.

Sincerely,

Vernon A. Wall
Director of Educational Programs & Publications
ACPA - College Student Educators International

National Center for Higher Education
1 Dupont Circle NW, Suite 300
Washington, DC 20036
tel: 1.202.835.2272 fax: 1.202.296.3286

APPENDIX T: SUMMARY OF FACTOR ANALYSES

Table 40 Summary of Results of Factor Analyses Performed on SCPC Competency Clusters

SCPC competency cluster	Factor Underlying competency items
Advising and helping	Advising and developing students
	Ability to help an individual set goals
	Ability to help an individual in his/her decision making process
	Ability to facilitate problem-solving
	Ability to challenge students effectively
	Communication skills
	Ability to use appropriate nonverbal communication with students and colleagues
	Ability to listen actively (e.g., paraphrase, summarize, clarify) to students and colleagues
Student learning and Development	Knowledge of student development theory
	Knowledge of different types of theories (e.g., psychosocial and identity development, cognitive-structural)
	Knowledge of how to use formal and informal student development theories to enhance my work with students
	Knowledge of various learning theories/models
	Knowledge of how differences in individual characteristics (e.g., race, class, gender, age, sexual orientation, disability) can influence student development
	Knowledge of my own development and how that influences my view of the development of others
Pluralism and inclusion	Multicultural competence
	Ability to assess my level of multicultural awareness
	Ability to expand my cultural skills and knowledge, especially related to specific cultural issues on my campus
	Understanding of the impact of things such as culture, attitudes, values, beliefs, assumptions, biases, identity, heritage, and life experiences on my work
	Ability to deconstruct assumptions and core beliefs about different cultures
Ethics	Knowledge of ethics
	Understanding of the ethical statements of ACPA and NASPA
	Understanding of the ethical statements of other professional associations relevant to my work (e.g., NACA, ACUHO-I, NODA, SACSA, AACC)
	Knowledge of the major ethical principles that serve as the foundation of these professional associations' ethical statements

SCPC competency cluster	Factor Underlying competency items
Ethics (continued)	Ethical practice
	Ability to recognize ethical issues in the course of my job
	Ability to use institutional resources (e.g., human resources, supervisor, institutional policies/procedures) to resolve ethical issues
Leadership and management/ Administration	
Resource management	Operational management
	Ability to utilize facilities management procedures to operate a facility
	Ability to utilize facilities management procedures to host an event/program in a facility
	Knowledge of basic techniques for budget management/monitoring
	Efficient and sustainable use of resources
	Ability to use technology to maximize efficiency and effectiveness of my work
	Understanding of environmentally friendly (i.e., "green") methods to complete my work
Human resources	Managing interpersonal relations
	Knowledge of the fundamentals of teamwork and teambuilding
	Understanding of the basic principles that underlie conflict in organizations and student life
	Understanding of how to facilitate conflict resolution
	Ability to use basic motivational techniques with others (including students and staff)
	Hiring practices
	Knowledge of my institution's hiring policies, procedures, and processes
	Understanding of appropriate hiring techniques

SCPC competency cluster	Factor Underlying competency items
Organizational development	Understanding of organizational environment
	Understanding of the political landscape (i.e., politics) of my organization/institution, including factors (e.g., policies, hierarchy, goals, resource allocation processes) that influence others to act
	Understanding of the organizational structure (i.e., hierarchy) of my institution
	Understanding of how my institution is governed (i.e., institutional governance)
	Understanding of my institution's cultural landscape (i.e., culture), including traditions and customs
	Ability to implement change in my organization (i.e., knowing the process to get a policy approved, understanding the role of campus decision-makers in the change process, etc.)
	Creating and meeting work objectives
	Ability to organize and plan my work tasks within the context of institutional priorities
	Ability to organize and plan my work tasks within the context of my individual performance objectives/goals
	Knowledge of the process necessary for identifying organizational goals
Social responsibility/ civic engagement	Community awareness and engagement
	Belief in contributing to the well-being of communities (campus, local, professional, state, and/or national), even outside of my job description
	Knowledge of major public policy issues (e.g., national security, immigration, environmental protection, health care) and decisions at the national, state, and local levels
	Knowledge of higher education issues (e.g., funding, student rights) at the national, state, and local levels
	Belief in the capacity of ordinary people to come together and take action to transform their communities
Legal foundations	Knowledge of legal concepts and their application
	Understanding of what torts and negligence are and how they affect professional practice
	Knowledge of when to seek advice from campus legal counsel
	Understanding of contract law and how it affects professional practice
	Ability to consult with campus legal counsel
	Understanding of how the US Constitution influences the rights of students, faculty, and staff at public institutions
	Knowledge of landmark civil rights, desegregation, and affirmative action case law that affects American higher education

SCPC competency cluster	Factor Underlying competency items
Assessment, evaluation, and research	Research, assessment, and evaluation
	Ability to assess whether or how the findings of a qualitative study transfer to my current work setting
	Ability to assess the quality of a study that uses qualitative methods
	Ability to assess the quality of a study that uses quantitative methods, including validity and reliability
	Ability to conduct program evaluations
	Ability to facilitate data collection for assessment/evaluation
	Ability to use professional literature to gain a better understanding of the effectiveness of programs and other initiatives
Teaching	Teaching/training and enabling learning
	Ability to shape the environment to ensure that learning outcomes are met
	Ability to assess teaching/training effectiveness and if learning has occurred
	Ability to incorporate the results of teaching, training, and learning assessment into my work
	Ability to construct learning outcomes for a program/initiative
	Ability to incorporate various learning theories/models into daily practice

Note. Individual competency items under each factor are listed in order of factor loading value, from highest to lowest.

APPENDIX U: INDIVIDUAL COMPETENCY ITEMS REMOVED FROM FACTOR ANALYSES

Table 41 Competency Items Removed from Factor Analyses

SCPC competency cluster	Competency item
Advising and helping	Ability to establish rapport with others (including students and colleagues) Ability to work with students on multiple issues (e.g., academic, personal) simultaneously Ability to challenge colleagues effectively Ability to encourage students and colleagues effectively Ability to refer others to on- or off-campus resources (e.g., offices, outside agencies) when needed
Student learning and Development	-
Pluralism and inclusion	Ability to facilitate dialogue between groups of different cultures, perspectives, and/or worldviews
Ethics	Ability to act in accordance with the ethical statements of the profession
Leadership and management/ Administration	
Resource management	-
Human resources	Ability to use basic supervision techniques within my work setting
Organizational development	Understanding of the values and processes that lead to organizational improvement Understanding of a variety of leadership styles (e.g., symbolic, expert, inspirational, etc.)
Social responsibility/ civic engagement	Knowledge of major policy issues and decisions on my campus
Legal foundations	Understanding of the legal differences between public and private institutions of higher education
Assessment, evaluation, and research	Understanding of the need to follow institutional/divisional policies regarding ethical assessment/evaluation/research Ability to correctly interpret data collected for assessment/evaluation/research Ability to interpret and use results of assessment/ evaluation/ research
Teaching	-

APPENDIX V: FACTOR ANALYSIS TABLES AND SCREE PLOTS FROM FINAL ITERATION

Table 42 Correlation Matrix for Advising and Helping Cluster

Abridged competency item	Listen actively	Nonverbal communication	Decision making	Set goals	Problem-solving	Challenge students
Listen actively[1]	-	.47	.23	.38	.28	.27
Nonverbal communication[2]		-	.26	.25	.18	.30
Decision making[5]			-	.60	.44	.42
Set goals[6]				-	.50	.48
Problem-solving[7]					-	.39
Challenge students[8]						-

Note. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.

Table 43 Anti-image Correlation Table for Advising and Helping Cluster

Abridged competency item	Listen actively	Nonverbal communication	Decision making	Set goals	Problem-solving	Challenge students
Listen actively[1]	.69[a]	-.42	.09	-.24	-.10	-.01
Nonverbal communication[2]		.68[a]	-.14	.06	.04	-.16
Decision making[5]			.76[a]	-.43	-.18	-.13
Set goals[6]				.75[a]	-.23	-.22
Problem-solving[7]					.85[a]	-.17
Challenge students[8]						.85[a]

Note. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.
[a]Measure of sampling adequacy.

Table 44 Communalities for Advising and Helping Cluster

Abridged competency item	Extraction[a]
Listen actively[1]	.71
Nonverbal communication[2]	.76
Decision making[5]	.65
Set goals[6]	.71
Problem-solving[7]	.57
Challenge students[8]	.51

Note. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.
[a]Principal component analysis was utilized as the extraction method.

Table 45 Rotated Component Matrix for Advising and Helping Cluster

	Component	
Abridged competency item	1	2
Listen actively[1]	.22	.81
Nonverbal communication[2]	.13	.86
Decision making[5]	.80	.11
Set goals[6]	.81	.22
Problem-solving[7]	.75	.08
Challenge students[8]	.67	.25

Note. Varimax with Kaiser Normalization was the rotation method utilized. The rotation converged in three iterations. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.

Table 46 Total Variance Explained for Advising and Helping Cluster

	Initial eigenvalues			Rotation sums of squared loadings		
Component	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %
1	2.84	47.25	47.25	2.37	39.49	39.49
2	1.07	17.79	65.04	1.53	25.55	65.04
3	0.65	10.76	75.80			
4	0.59	9.85	85.66			
5	0.52	8.63	94.28			
6	0.34	5.72	100.00			

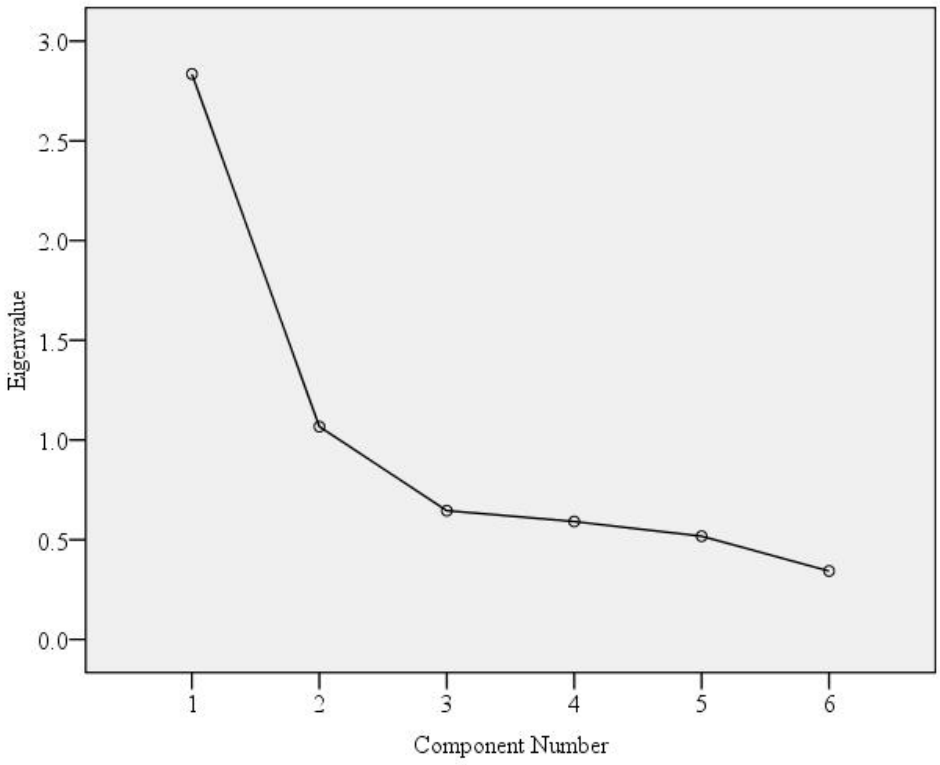


Figure 4: Scree Plot for Advising and Helping Cluster

Table 47 Correlation Matrix for Student Learning and Development Cluster

Abridged competency item	Types of theories	Learning theories/models	Individual characteristics	Own development	Use theories
Types of theories[12]	-	.62	.44	.43	.67
Learning theories/models[13]		-	.40	.32	.53
Individual characteristics[14]			-	.59	.43
Own development[15]				-	.47
Use theories[16]					-

Note. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.

Table 48 Anti-image Correlation Table for Student Learning and Development Cluster

Abridged competency item	Types of theories	Learning theories/models	Individual characteristics	Own development	Use theories
Types of theories[12]	.77[a]	-.39	-.09	-.09	-.44
Learning theories/models[13]		.81[a]	-.15	.05	-.18
Individual characteristics[14]			.78[a]	-.47	-.06
Own development[15]				.76[a]	-.22
Use theories[16]					.81[a]

Note. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.

[a]Measure of sampling adequacy.

Table 49 Communalities for Student Learning and Development Cluster

Abridged competency item	Extraction[a]
Types of theories[12]	.69
Learning theories/models[13]	.56
Individual characteristics[14]	.53
Own development[15]	.51
Use theories[16]	.67

Note. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.
[a]Principal component analysis was utilized as the extraction method.

Table 50 Component Matrix for Student Learning and Development Cluster

	Component
Abridged competency item	1
Types of theories[12]	.83
Learning theories/models[13]	.75
Individual characteristics[14]	.73
Own development[15]	.72
Use theories[16]	.82

Note. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.

Table 51 Total Variance Explained for Student Learning and Development Cluster

	Initial eigenvalues		
Component	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %
1	2.96	59.22	59.22
2	0.85	17.04	76.26
3	0.50	10.01	86.26
4	0.37	7.45	93.71
5	0.32	6.29	100.00

Table 52 Correlation Matrix for Pluralism and Inclusion Cluster

Abridged competency item	Multicultural awareness	Impact on work	Deconstruct assumptions	Expand skills/knowledge
Multicultural awareness[17]	-	.62	.64	.67
Impact on work[18]		-	.65	.65
Deconstruct assumptions[19]			-	.62
Expand skills/knowledge[20]				-

Note. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.

Table 53 Anti-image Correlation Table for Pluralism and Inclusion Cluster

Abridged competency item	Multicultural awareness	Impact on work	Deconstruct assumptions	Expand skills/knowledge
Multicultural awareness[17]	.83[a]	-.20	-.30	-.37
Impact on work[18]		.84[a]	-.33	-.31
Deconstruct assumptions[19]			.84[a]	-.20
Expand skills/knowledge[20]				.83[a]

Note. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.
[a]Measure of sampling adequacy.

Table 54 Communalities for Pluralism and Inclusion Cluster

Abridged competency item	Extraction[a]
Multicultural awareness[17]	.74
Impact on work[18]	.73
Deconstruct assumptions[19]	.72
Expand skills/knowledge[20]	.74

Note. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.
[a]Principal component analysis was utilized as the extraction method.

Table 55 Component Matrix for Pluralism and Inclusion Cluster

	Component
Abridged competency item	1
Multicultural awareness[17]	.86
Impact on work[18]	.85
Deconstruct assumptions[19]	.85
Expand skills/knowledge[20]	.86

Note. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.

Table 56 Total Variance Explained for Pluralism and Inclusion Cluster

	Initial eigenvalues		
Component	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %
1	2.92	73.11	73.11
2	0.40	9.89	83.00
3	0.37	9.24	92.24
4	0.31	7.76	100.00

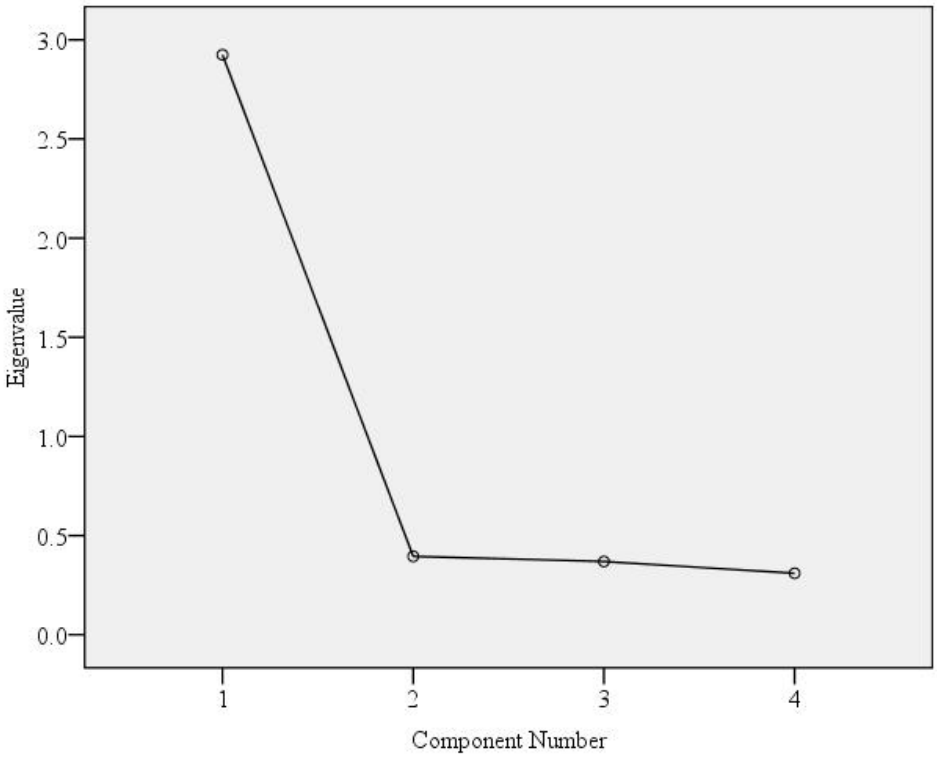


Figure 5: Scree Plot for Pluralism and Inclusion Cluster

Table 57 Correlation Matrix for Ethics Cluster

Abridged competency item	ACPA/ NASPA statements	Other statements	Ethical principles	Recognize ethical issues	Resources to resolve issues
ACPA/NASPA statements[22]	-	.73	.67	.22	.37
Other statements[23]		-	.63	.24	.34
Ethical principles[24]			-	.31	.33
Recognize ethical issues[26]				-	.53
Resources to resolve issues[27]					-

Note. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.

Table 58 Anti-image Correlation Table for Ethics Cluster

Abridged competency item	ACPA/ NASPA statements	Other statements	Ethical principles	Recognize ethical issues	Resources to resolve issues
ACPA/NASPA statements[22]	.72[a]	-.51	-.39	.10	-.17
Other statements[23]		.77[a]	-.26	-.02	-.06
Ethical principles[24]			.81[a]	-.19	.01
Recognize ethical issues[26]				.64[a]	-.48
Resources to resolve issues[27]					.71[a]

Note. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.
[a]Measure of sampling adequacy.

Table 59 Communalities for Ethics Cluster

Abridged competency item	Extraction[a]
ACPA/NASPA statements[22]	.83
Other statements[23]	.79
Ethical principles[24]	.73
Recognize ethical issues[26]	.80
Resources to resolve issues[27]	.74

Note. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.
[a]Principal component analysis was utilized as the extraction method.

Table 60 Rotated Component Matrix for Ethics Cluster

	Component	
Abridged competency item	1	2
ACPA/NASPA statements[22]	.90	.15
Other statements[23]	.88	.15
Ethical principles[24]	.82	.23
Recognize ethical issues[26]	.10	.89
Resources to resolve issues[27]	.26	.82

Note. Varimax with Kaiser Normalization was the rotation method utilized. The rotation converged in three iterations. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.

Table 61 Total Variance Explained for Ethics Cluster

	Initial eigenvalues			Rotation sums of squared loadings		
Component	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %
1	2.79	55.69	55.69	2.33	46.62	46.62
2	1.10	22.03	77.73	1.56	31.11	77.73
3	0.49	9.89	87.61			
4	0.36	7.18	94.79			
5	0.26	5.21	100.00			

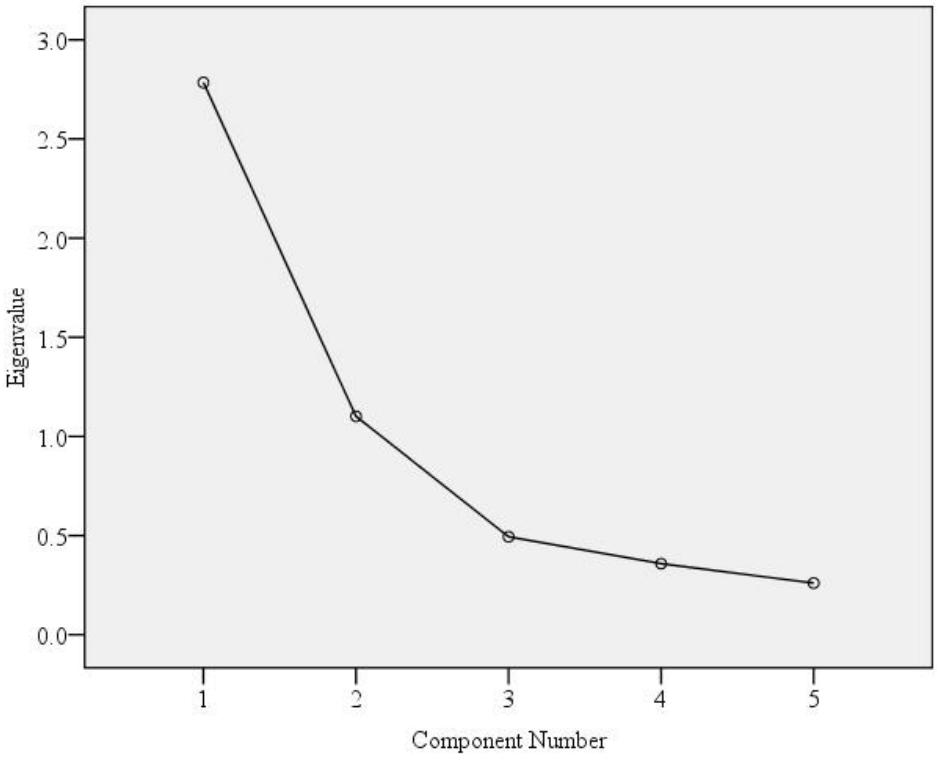


Figure 6: Scree Plot for Ethics Cluster

Table 62 Correlation Matrix for Leadership and Management/Administration: Resource Management Subcompetency Area

Abridged competency item	Operate facility	Host event in facility	Budget management	Use technology	Green methods
Operate facility[28]	-	.50	.40	.10	.29
Host event in facility[29]		-	.56	.29	.32
Budget management[30]			-	.26	.24
Use technology[31]				-	.40
Green methods[32]					-

Note. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.

Table 63 Anti-image Correlation Table for Leadership and Management/Administration: Resource Management Subcompetency Area

Abridged competency item	Operate facility	Host event in facility	Budget management	Use technology	Green methods
Operate facility[28]	.72[a]	-.35	-.18	.13	-.18
Host event in facility[29]		.70[a]	-.41	-.14	-.11
Budget management[30]			.74[a]	-.13	-.00
Use technology[31]				.65[a]	-.35
Green methods[32]					.71[a]

Note. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.
[a]Measure of sampling adequacy.

Table 64 Communalities for Leadership and Management/Administration: Resource Management Subcompetency Area

Abridged competency item	Extraction[a]
Operate facility[28]	.66
Host event in facility[29]	.72
Budget management[30]	.62
Use technology[31]	.77
Green methods[32]	.63

Note. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.
[a]Principal component analysis was utilized as the extraction method.

Table 65 Rotated Component Matrix for Leadership and Management/Administration: Resource Management Subcompetency Area

	Component	
Abridged competency item	1	2
Operate facility[28]	.81	.02
Host event in facility[29]	.81	.26
Budget management[30]	.77	.20
Use technology[31]	.07	.87
Green methods[32]	.24	.76

Note. Varimax with Kaiser Normalization was the rotation method utilized. The rotation converged in three iterations. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.

Table 66 Total Variance Explained for Leadership and Management/Administration: Resource Management Subcompetency Area

	Initial eigenvalues			Rotation sums of squared loadings		
Component	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %
1	2.37	47.44	47.44	1.96	39.16	39.16
2	1.03	20.54	67.99	1.44	28.82	67.99
3	0.70	13.93	81.91			
4	0.49	9.86	91.77			
5	0.41	8.23	100.00			

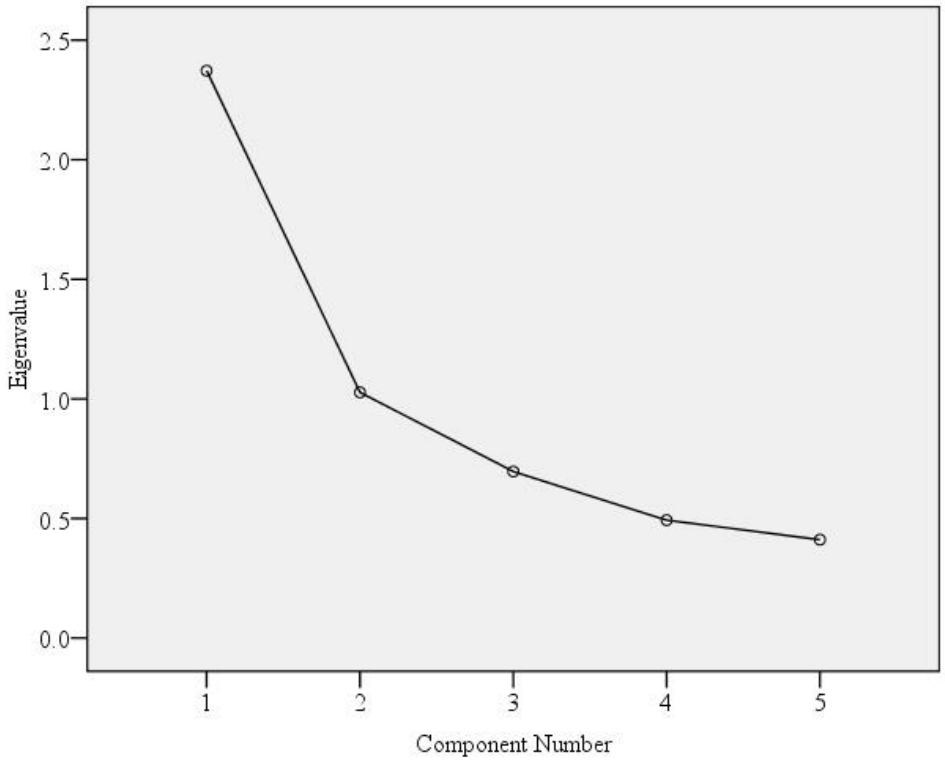


Figure 7: Scree Plot for Leadership and Management/Administration: Resource Management Subcompetency Area

Table 67 Correlation Matrix for Leadership and Management/Administration: Human Resources Subcompetency Area

Abridged competency item	Principles of conflict	Conflict resolution	Teamwork/ teambuilding	Motivational techniques	Hiring techniques	Institutional hiring policies
Principles of conflict[33]	-	.61	.54	.50	.33	.32
Conflict resolution[34]		-	.64	.56	.49	.37
Teamwork/ teambuilding[35]			-	.74	.42	.36
Motivational techniques[36]				-	.46	.45
Hiring techniques[38]					-	.77
Institutional hiring policies[39]						-

Note. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.

Table 68 Anti-image Correlation Table for Leadership and Management/Administration: Human Resources Subcompetency Area

Abridged competency item	Principles of conflict	Conflict resolution	Teamwork/ teambuilding	Motivational techniques	Hiring techniques	Institutional hiring policies
Principles of conflict[33]	.86[a]	-.38	-.13	-.11	.07	-.08
Conflict resolution[34]		.82[a]	-.31	-.05	-.25	.09
Teamwork/ teambuilding[35]			.79[a]	-.55	-.04	.04
Motivational techniques[36]				.81[a]	-.03	-.16
Hiring techniques[38]					.70[a]	-.70
Institutional hiring policies[39]						.68[a]

Note. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.
[a]Measure of sampling adequacy.

Table 69 Communalities for Leadership and Management/Administration: Human Resources Subcompetency Area

Abridged competency item	Extraction[a]
Principles of conflict[33]	.65
Conflict resolution[34]	.71
Teamwork/ teambuilding[35]	.77
Motivational techniques[36]	.69
Hiring techniques[38]	.88
Institutional hiring policies[39]	.89

Note. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.
[a]Principal component analysis was utilized as the extraction method.

Table 70 Rotated Component Matrix for Leadership and Management/Administration: Human Resources Subcompetency Area

	Component	
Abridged competency item	1	2
Principles of conflict[33]	.80	.11
Conflict resolution[34]	.80	.26
Teamwork/ teambuilding[35]	.85	.22
Motivational techniques[36]	.76	.33
Hiring techniques[38]	.28	.89
Institutional hiring policies[39]	.20	.92

Note. Varimax with Kaiser Normalization was the rotation method utilized. The rotation converged in three iterations. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.

Table 71 Total Variance Explained for Leadership and Management/Administration: Human Resources Subcompetency Area

	Initial eigenvalues			Rotation sums of squared loadings		
Component	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %
1	3.53	58.81	58.81	2.70	44.96	44.96
2	1.05	17.57	76.38	1.89	31.42	76.38
3	0.57	9.46	85.84			
4	0.40	6.66	92.50			
5	0.24	4.02	96.52			
6	0.21	3.48	100.00			

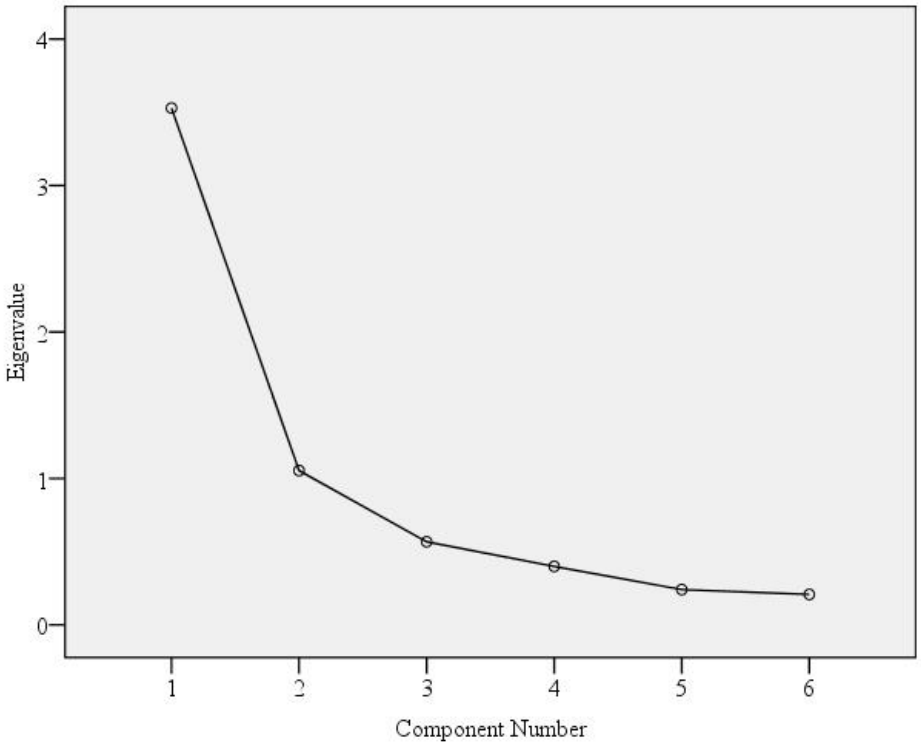


Figure 8: Scree Plot for Leadership and Management/Administration: Human Resources Subcompetency Area

Table 72 Correlation Matrix for Leadership and Management/Administration: Organizational Development Subcompetency Area

Abridged competency item	Identify organizational goals	Tasks within institution	Tasks within individual	Cultural landscape	Organizational structure	Institutional governance	Political landscape	Implement change
Identify organizational goals[40]	-	.63	.49	.42	.48	.55	.32	.52
Tasks within institution[41]		-	.65	.50	.48	.55	.34	.46
Tasks within individual[42]			-	.45	.43	.40	.29	.41
Cultural landscape[43]				-	.61	.57	.59	.52
Organizational structure[44]					-	.67	.61	.52
Institutional governance[45]						-	.61	.54
Political landscape[46]							-	.59
Implement change[47]								-

Note. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.

Table 73 Anti-image Correlation Table for Leadership and Management/Administration: Organizational Development Subcompetency Area

Abridged competency item	Identify organizational goals	Tasks within institution	Tasks within individual	Cultural landscape	Organizational structure	Institutional governance	Political landscape	Implement change
Identify organizational goals[40]	.87[a]	-.33	-.09	.02	-.10	-.21	.15	-.25
Tasks within institution[41]		.85[a]	-.43	-.13	-.01	-.19	.08	-.04
Tasks within individual[42]			.86[a]	-.13	-.10	.08	.04	-.07
Cultural landscape[43]				.93[a]	-.20	-.09	-.26	-.09
Organizational structure[44]					.91[a]	-.30	-.23	-.04
Institutional governance[45]						.89[a]	-.27	-.03
Political landscape[46]							.83[a]	-.35
Implement change[47]								.90[a]

Note. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.

[a]Measure of sampling adequacy.

Table 74 Communalities for Leadership and Management/Administration: Organizational Development Subcompetency Area

Abridged competency item	Extraction[a]
Identify organizational goals[40]	.67
Tasks within institution[41]	.80
Tasks within individual[42]	.70
Cultural landscape[43]	.64
Organizational structure[44]	.69
Institutional governance[45]	.69
Political landscape[46]	.81
Implement change[47]	.60

Note. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.
[a]Principal component analysis was utilized as the extraction method.

Table 75 Rotated Component Matrix for Leadership and Management/Administration: Organizational Development Subcompetency Area

	Component	
Abridged competency item	1	2
Identify organizational goals[40]	.32	.75
Tasks within institution[41]	.28	.85
Tasks within individual[42]	.19	.82
Cultural landscape[43]	.72	.35
Organizational structure[44]	.76	.34
Institutional governance[45]	.73	.40
Political landscape[46]	.90	.05
Implement change[47]	.68	.36

Note. Varimax with Kaiser Normalization was the rotation method utilized. The rotation converged in three iterations. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.

Table 76 Total Variance Explained for Leadership and Management/Administration: Organizational Development Subcompetency Area

	Initial eigenvalues			Rotation sums of squared loadings		
Component	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %
1	4.56	57.00	57.00	3.13	39.07	39.07
2	1.04	13.01	70.01	2.48	30.93	70.01
3	0.58	7.21	77.22			
4	0.52	6.52	83.74			
5	0.39	4.90	88.63			
6	0.35	4.36	92.99			
7	0.29	3.60	96.59			
8	0.27	3.41	100.00			

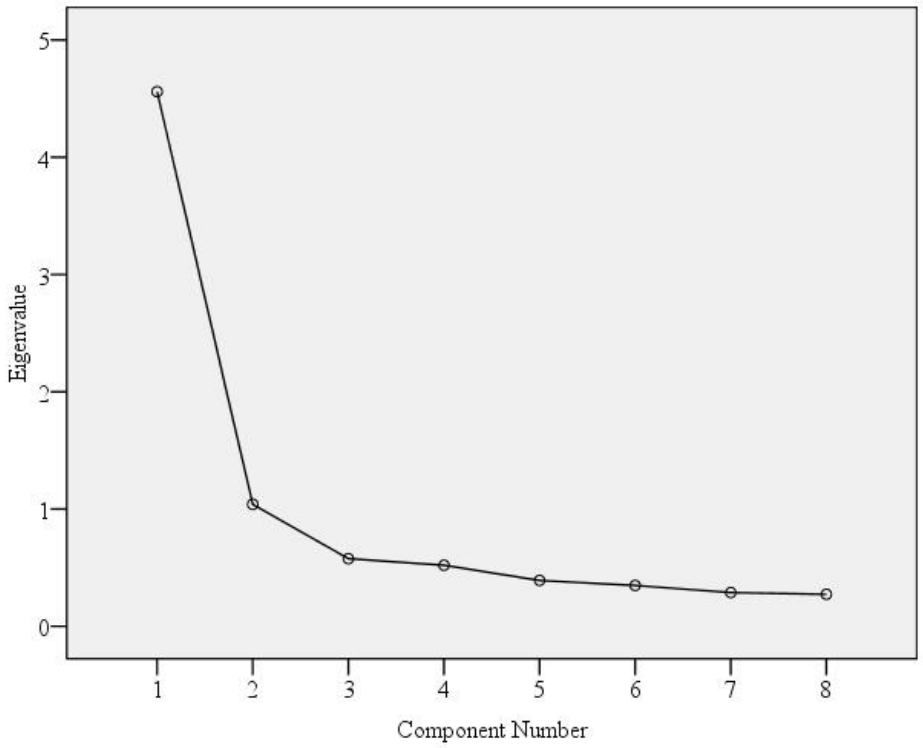


Figure 9: Scree Plot for Leadership and Management/Administration: Organizational Development Subcompetency Area

Table 77 Correlation Matrix for Leadership and Management/Administration: Social Responsibility/Civic Engagement Subcompetency Area

Abridged competency item	Public policy issues	Higher education issues	Contribute to communities	Ordinary people transform
Public policy issues[50]	-	.64	.53	.38
Higher education issues[51]		-	.48	.34
Contribute to communities[53]			-	.71
Ordinary people transform[54]				-

Note. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.

Table 78 Anti-image Correlation Table for Leadership and Management/Administration: Social Responsibility/Civic Engagement Subcompetency Area

Abridged competency item	Public policy issues	Higher education issues	Contribute to communities	Ordinary people transform
Public policy issues[50]	.72[a]	-.52	-.25	-.00
Higher education issues[51]		.72[a]	-.17	.01
Contribute to communities[53]			.67[a]	-.65
Ordinary people transform[54]				.65[a]

Note. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.
[a]Measure of sampling adequacy.

Table 79 Communalities for Leadership and Management/Administration: Social Responsibility/Civic Engagement Subcompetency Area

Abridged competency item	Extraction[a]
Public policy issues[50]	.64
Higher education issues[51]	.58
Contribute to communities[53]	.74
Ordinary people transform[54]	.58

Note. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.
[a]Principal component analysis was utilized as the extraction method.

Table 80 Component Matrix for Leadership and Management/Administration: Social Responsibility/Civic Engagement Subcompetency Area

	Component
Abridged competency item	1
Public policy issues[50]	.80
Higher education issues[51]	.76
Contribute to communities[53]	.86
Ordinary people transform[54]	.76

Note. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.

Table 81 Total Variance Explained for Leadership and Management/Administration: Social Responsibility/Civic Engagement Subcompetency Area

	Initial eigenvalues		
Component	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %
1	2.54	63.59	63.59
2	0.84	20.93	84.51
3	0.36	8.98	93.49
4	0.26	6.51	100.00

Table 82 Correlation Matrix for Legal Foundations Cluster

Abridged competency item	US Constitution	Landmark case law	Torts and negligence	Contract law	When seek advice	Consult legal counsel
US Constitution[56]	-	.60	.60	.48	.47	.49
Landmark case law[57]		-	.63	.53	.45	.43
Torts and negligence[58]			-	.69	.55	.51
Contract law[59]				-	.61	.56
When seek advice[60]					-	.81
Consult legal counsel[61]						-

Note. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.

Table 83 Anti-image Correlation Table for Legal Foundations Cluster

Abridged competency item	US Constitution	Landmark case law	Torts and negligence	Contract law	When seek advice	Consult legal counsel
US Constitution[56]	.88[a]	-.33	-.25	.01	-.01	-.15
Landmark case law[57]		.87[a]	-.29	-.10	-.05	.01
Torts and negligence[58]			.84[a]	-.43	-.07	-.01
Contract law[59]				.87[a]	-.20	-.09
When seek advice[60]					.77[a]	-.68
Consult legal counsel[61]						77[a]

Note. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.
[a]Measure of sampling adequacy.

Table 84 Communalities for Legal Foundations Cluster

Abridged competency item	Extraction[a]
US Constitution[56]	.57
Landmark case law[57]	.57
Torts and negligence[58]	.70
Contract law[59]	.66
When seek advice[60]	.67
Consult legal counsel[61]	.63

Note. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.
[a]Principal component analysis was utilized as the extraction method.

Table 85 Component Matrix for Legal Foundations Cluster

	Component
Abridged competency item	1
US Constitution[56]	.76
Landmark case law[57]	.76
Torts and negligence[58]	.84
Contract law[59]	.81
When seek advice[60]	.82
Consult legal counsel[61]	.80

Note. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.

Table 86 Total Variance Explained for Legal Foundations Cluster

	Initial eigenvalues		
Component	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %
1	3.81	63.47	63.47
2	0.83	13.76	77.23
3	0.52	8.74	85.97
4	0.38	6.37	92.34
5	0.27	4.52	96.86
6	0.19	3.14	100.00

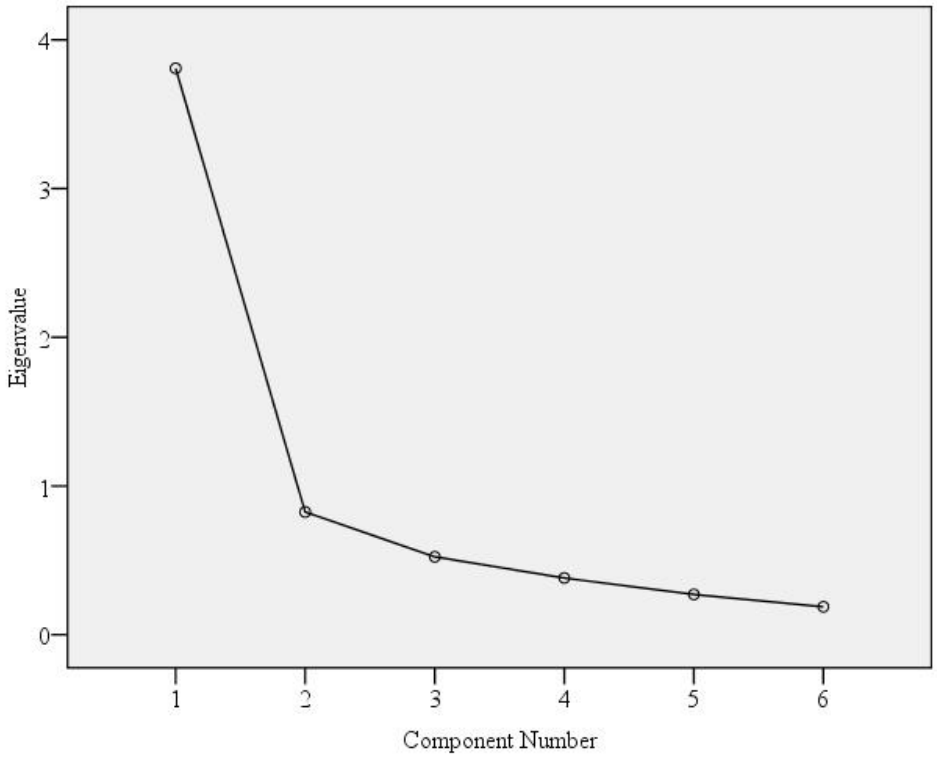


Figure 10: Scree Plot for Legal Foundations Cluster

Table 87 Correlation Matrix for Assessment, Evaluation, and Research Cluster

Abridged competency item	Professional literature	Quality of qualitative	Qualitative transfer to work	Quality of quantitative	Program evaluations	Facilitate data collection
Professional literature[62]	-	.58	.63	.59	.38	.33
Quality of qualitative[63]		-	.89	.76	.50	.56
Qualitative transfer to work[64]			-	.81	.52	.50
Quality of quantitative[65]				-	.50	.52
Program evaluations[67]					-	.72
Facilitate data collection[68]						-

Note. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.

Table 88 Anti-image Correlation Table for Assessment, Evaluation, and Research Cluster

Abridged competency item	Professional literature	Quality of qualitative	Qualitative transfer to work	Quality of quantitative	Program evaluations	Facilitate data collection
Professional literature[62]	.94[a]	-.05	-.20	-.16	-.09	.08
Quality of qualitative[63]		.80[a]	-.69	-.09	.11	-.27
Qualitative transfer to work[64]			.77[a]	-.39	-.16	.15
Quality of quantitative[65]				.91[a]	-.02	-.14
Program evaluations[67]					.77[a]	-.62
Facilitate data collection[68]						.75[a]

Note. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.
[a]Measure of sampling adequacy.

Table 89 Communalities for Assessment, Evaluation, and Research Cluster

Abridged competency item	Extraction[a]
Professional literature[62]	.51
Quality of qualitative[63]	.81
Qualitative transfer to work[64]	.83
Quality of quantitative[65]	.76
Program evaluations[67]	.53
Facilitate data collection[68]	.54

Note. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.
[a]Principal component analysis was utilized as the extraction method.

Table 90 Component Matrix for Assessment, Evaluation, and Research Cluster

	Component
Abridged competency item	1
Professional literature[62]	.72
Quality of qualitative[63]	.90
Qualitative transfer to work[64]	.91
Quality of quantitative[65]	.87
Program evaluations[67]	.73
Facilitate data collection[68]	.73

Note. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.

Table 91 Total Variance Explained for Assessment, Evaluation, and Research Cluster

	Initial eigenvalues		
Component	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %
1	3.97	66.18	66.18
2	0.92	15.36	81.54
3	0.49	8.09	89.63
4	0.27	4.56	94.20
5	0.25	4.21	98.41
6	0.10	1.59	100.00

Table 92 Correlation Matrix for Teaching Cluster

Abridged competency item	Incorporate learning theories	Construct learning outcomes	Shape environment	Assess effectiveness	Incorporate results
Incorporate learning theories[71]	-	.59	.61	.57	.60
Construct learning outcomes[72]		-	.81	.71	.71
Shape environment[73]			-	.80	.78
Assess effectiveness[74]				-	.90
Incorporate results[75]					-

Note. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.

Table 93 Anti-image Correlation Table for Teaching Cluster

Abridged competency item	Incorporate learning theories	Construct learning outcomes	Shape environment	Assess effectiveness	Incorporate results
Incorporate learning theories[71]	.96[a]	-.16	-.13	-.00	-.15
Construct learning outcomes[72]		.87[a]	-.52	-.02	-.10
Shape environment[73]			.86[a]	-.29	-.09
Assess effectiveness[74]				.79[a]	-.72
Incorporate results[75]					.80[a]

Note. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.

[a]Measure of sampling adequacy.

Table 94 Communalities for Teaching Cluster

Abridged competency item	Extraction[a]
Incorporate learning theories[71]	.56
Construct learning outcomes[72]	.76
Shape environment[73]	.84
Assess effectiveness[74]	.84
Incorporate results[75]	.84

Note. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.
[a]Principal component analysis was utilized as the extraction method.

Table 95 Component Matrix for Teaching Cluster

	Component
Abridged competency item	1
Incorporate learning theories[71]	.75
Construct learning outcomes[72]	.87
Shape environment[73]	.92
Assess effectiveness[74]	.92
Incorporate results[75]	.92

Note. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.

Table 96 Total Variance Explained for Teaching Cluster

	Initial eigenvalues		
Component	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %
1	3.85	76.90	76.90
2	0.52	10.35	87.25
3	0.37	7.42	94.67
4	0.17	3.42	98.09
5	0.10	1.91	100.00

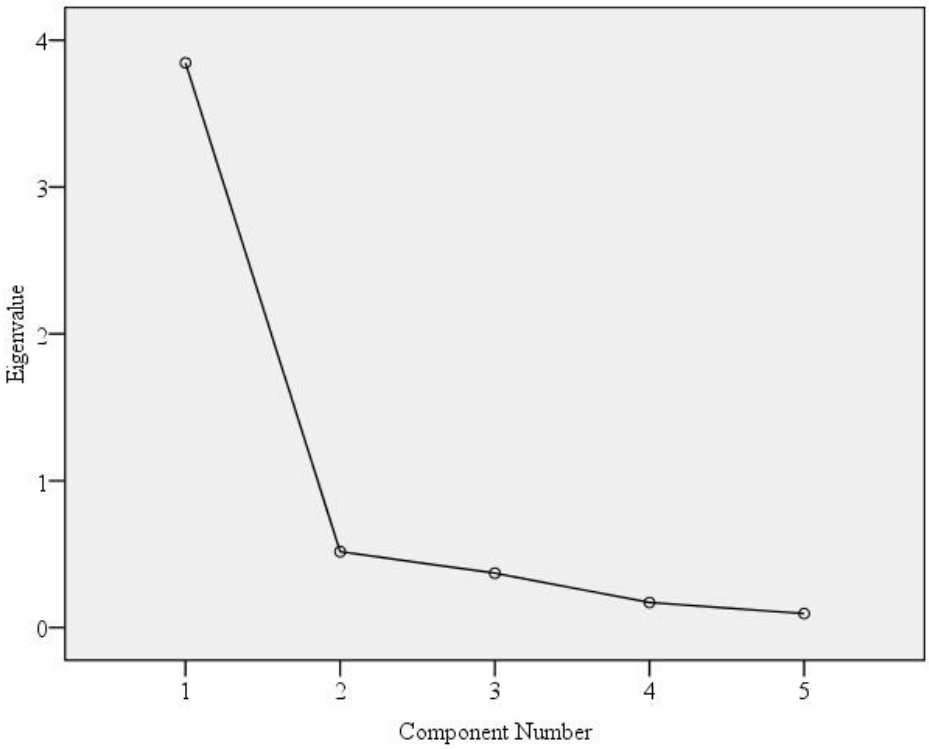


Figure 11: Scree Plot for Teaching Cluster

APPENDIX W: SUMMARY OF ANOVA RESULTS BY DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLE

Table 97 Summary of ANOVAs Run on Factor Variables by Years in Current Position

Factor variable	Derived from SCPC competency cluster	*F* statistic significant*	Group difference
Advising and developing students	Advising and helping	No	
Communication skills	Advising and helping	No	
Knowledge of student development theory	Student learning and development	No	
Multicultural competence	Pluralism and inclusion	No	
Knowledge of ethics	Ethics	Yes	0-1 year[a] vs. 1-2 years
Ethical practice	Ethics	No	
Operational management	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Efficient and sustainable use of resources	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Managing interpersonal relations	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Hiring practices	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Understanding of organizational environment	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Creating and meeting work objectives	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Community awareness and engagement	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Knowledge of legal concepts and their application	Legal foundations	No	
Research, assessment, and evaluation	Assessment, evaluation, and research	No	
Teaching/training and enabling learning	Teaching	No	

Note. Bonferroni post hoc test was utilized to indicate group differences when omnibus *F* statistic was significant.
[a]Group had higher mean of compared groups.
*$p < .05$.

Table 98 Summary of ANOVAs Run on Removed Competency Items by Years in Current Position

Abridged competency item	SCPC competency cluster	*F* statistic significant*	Group difference
Establish rapport[3]	Advising and helping	No	
Student multiple issues[4]	Advising and helping	No	
Challenge colleagues[9]	Advising and helping	No	
Encourage others[10]	Advising and helping	No	
Refer to resources[11]	Advising and helping	No	
Facilitate dialogue[21]	Pluralism and inclusion	No	
Act in accordance[25]	Ethics	No	
Supervision techniques[37]	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Organizational improvement[48]	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Leadership styles[49]	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Policy issues on campus[52]	Leadership and management/administration	Yes	1-2 years[a] vs. 3-4 years
Differences public/private[55]	Legal foundations	No	
Institutional policy[66]	Assessment, evaluation, and research	No	
Interpret data[69]	Assessment, evaluation, and research	No	
Use results[70]	Assessment, evaluation, and research	No	

Note. Bonferroni post hoc test was utilized to indicate group differences when omnibus *F* statistic was significant.
[a]Group had higher mean of compared groups. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.
*$p < .05$.

Table 99 Summary of ANOVAs Run on Factor Variables by Years in Field

Factor variable	Derived from SCPC competency cluster	*F* statistic significant	Group difference
Advising and developing students	Advising and helping	No	
Communication skills	Advising and helping	No	
Knowledge of student development theory	Student learning and development	No	
Multicultural competence	Pluralism and inclusion	No	
Knowledge of ethics	Ethics	No	
Ethical practice	Ethics	No	
Operational management	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Efficient and sustainable use of resources	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Managing interpersonal relations	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Hiring practices	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Understanding of organizational environment	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Creating and meeting work objectives	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Community awareness and engagement	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Knowledge of legal concepts and their application	Legal foundations	No	
Research, assessment, and evaluation	Assessment, evaluation, and research	No	
Teaching/training and enabling learning	Teaching	No	

Table 100 Summary of ANOVAs Run on Removed Competency Items by Years in Field

Abridged competency item	SCPC competency cluster	*F* statistic significant	Group difference
Establish rapport[3]	Advising and helping	No	
Student multiple issues[4]	Advising and helping	No	
Challenge colleagues[9]	Advising and helping	No	
Encourage others[10]	Advising and helping	No	
Refer to resources[11]	Advising and helping	No	
Facilitate dialogue[21]	Pluralism and inclusion	No	
Act in accordance[25]	Ethics	No	
Supervision techniques[37]	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Organizational improvement[48]	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Leadership styles[49]	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Policy issues on campus[52]	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Differences public/private[55]	Legal foundations	No	
Institutional policy[66]	Assessment, evaluation, and research	No	
Interpret data[69]	Assessment, evaluation, and research	No	
Use results[70]	Assessment, evaluation, and research	No	

Note. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.

Table 101 Summary of ANOVAs Run on Factor Variables by Age

Factor variable	Derived from SCPC competency cluster	*F* statistic significant*	Group difference
Advising and developing students	Advising and helping	Yes	Post hoc did not indicate
Communication skills	Advising and helping	No	
Knowledge of student development theory	Student learning and development	No	
Multicultural competence	Pluralism and inclusion	No	
Knowledge of ethics	Ethics	No	
Ethical practice	Ethics	No	
Operational management	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Efficient and sustainable use of resources	Leadership and management/administration	Yes	Post hoc did not indicate
Managing interpersonal relations	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Hiring practices	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Understanding of organizational environment	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Creating and meeting work objectives	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Community awareness and engagement	Leadership and management/administration	Yes	22-25[a] vs. 36-40 26-30[a] vs. 36-40
Knowledge of legal concepts and their application	Legal foundations	No	
Research, assessment, and evaluation	Assessment, evaluation, and research	Yes	Post hoc did not indicate
Teaching/training and enabling learning	Teaching	No	

Note. Bonferroni post hoc test was utilized to indicate group differences when omnibus *F* statistic was significant.
[a]Group had higher mean of compared groups.
*$p < .05$.

Table 102 Summary of ANOVAs Run on Removed Competency Items by Age

Abridged competency item	SCPC competency cluster	*F* statistic significant	Group difference
Establish rapport[3]	Advising and helping	No	
Student multiple issues[4]	Advising and helping	No	
Challenge colleagues[9]	Advising and helping	No	
Encourage others[10]	Advising and helping	No	
Refer to resources[11]	Advising and helping	No	
Facilitate dialogue[21]	Pluralism and inclusion	No	
Act in accordance[25]	Ethics	No	
Supervision techniques[37]	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Organizational improvement[48]	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Leadership styles[49]	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Policy issues on campus[52]	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Differences public/private[55]	Legal foundations	No	
Institutional policy[66]	Assessment, evaluation, and research	No	
Interpret data[69]	Assessment, evaluation, and research	No	
Use results[70]	Assessment, evaluation, and research	No	

Note. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.

Table 103 Summary of ANOVAs Run on Factor Variables by Gender

Factor variable	Derived from SCPC competency cluster	*F* statistic significant	Group difference
Advising and developing students	Advising and helping	No	
Communication skills	Advising and helping	No	
Knowledge of student development theory	Student learning and development	No	
Multicultural competence	Pluralism and inclusion	No	
Knowledge of ethics	Ethics	No	
Ethical practice	Ethics	No	
Operational management	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Efficient and sustainable use of resources	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Managing interpersonal relations	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Hiring practices	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Understanding of organizational environment	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Creating and meeting work objectives	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Community awareness and engagement	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Knowledge of legal concepts and their application	Legal foundations	No	
Research, assessment, and evaluation	Assessment, evaluation, and research	No	
Teaching/training and enabling learning	Teaching	No	

Table 104 Summary of ANOVAs Run on Removed Competency Items by Gender

Abridged competency item	SCPC competency cluster	*F* statistic significant*	Group difference
Establish rapport[3]	Advising and helping	Yes	Female[a] vs. male
Student multiple issues[4]	Advising and helping	No	
Challenge colleagues[9]	Advising and helping	No	
Encourage others[10]	Advising and helping	No	
Refer to resources[11]	Advising and helping	Yes	Female[a] vs. male
Facilitate dialogue[21]	Pluralism and inclusion	No	
Act in accordance[25]	Ethics	No	
Supervision techniques[37]	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Organizational improvement[48]	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Leadership styles[49]	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Policy issues on campus[52]	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Differences public/private[55]	Legal foundations	No	
Institutional policy[66]	Assessment, evaluation, and research	No	
Interpret data[69]	Assessment, evaluation, and research	No	
Use results[70]	Assessment, evaluation, and research	No	

Note. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.
[a]Group had higher mean of compared groups.
*$p < .05$.

Table 105 Summary of ANOVAs Run on Factor Variables by Highest Educational Degree Earned

Factor variable	Derived from SCPC competency cluster	*F* statistic significant	Group difference
Advising and developing students	Advising and helping	No	
Communication skills	Advising and helping	No	
Knowledge of student development theory	Student learning and development	No	
Multicultural competence	Pluralism and inclusion	No	
Knowledge of ethics	Ethics	No	
Ethical practice	Ethics	No	
Operational management	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Efficient and sustainable use of resources	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Managing interpersonal relations	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Hiring practices	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Understanding of organizational environment	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Creating and meeting work objectives	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Community awareness and engagement	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Knowledge of legal concepts and their application	Legal foundations	No	
Research, assessment, and evaluation	Assessment, evaluation, and research	No	
Teaching/training and enabling learning	Teaching	No	

Table 106 Summary of ANOVAs Run on Removed Competency Items by Highest Educational Degree Earned

Abridged competency item	SCPC competency cluster	*F* statistic significant*	Group difference
Establish rapport[3]	Advising and helping	No	
Student multiple issues[4]	Advising and helping	No	
Challenge colleagues[9]	Advising and helping	No	
Encourage others[10]	Advising and helping	No	
Refer to resources[11]	Advising and helping	No	
Facilitate dialogue[21]	Pluralism and inclusion	No	
Act in accordance[25]	Ethics	No	
Supervision techniques[37]	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Organizational improvement[48]	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Leadership styles[49]	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Policy issues on campus[52]	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Differences public/private[55]	Legal foundations	No	
Institutional policy[66]	Assessment, evaluation, and research	No	
Interpret data[69]	Assessment, evaluation, and research	No	
Use results[70]	Assessment, evaluation, and research	Yes	Bachelor's vs. master's[a]

Note. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.
[a]Group had higher mean of compared groups.
*$p < .05$.

Table 107 Summary of ANOVAs Run on Factor Variables by Possession of Student Affairs or Related Degree

Factor variable	Derived from SCPC competency cluster	*F* statistic significant*	Group difference
Advising and developing students	Advising and helping	No	
Communication skills	Advising and helping	No	
Knowledge of student development theory	Student learning and development	Yes	No vs. yes[a]
Multicultural competence	Pluralism and inclusion	No	
Knowledge of ethics	Ethics	No	
Ethical practice	Ethics	No	
Operational management	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Efficient and sustainable use of resources	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Managing interpersonal relations	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Hiring practices	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Understanding of organizational environment	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Creating and meeting work objectives	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Community awareness and engagement	Leadership and management/administration	Yes	No vs. yes[a]
Knowledge of legal concepts and their application	Legal foundations	No	
Research, assessment, and evaluation	Assessment, evaluation, and research	No	
Teaching/training and enabling learning	Teaching	No	

Note. Bonferroni post hoc test was utilized to indicate group differences when omnibus *F* statistic was significant.
[a]Group had higher mean of compared groups.
*$p < .05$.

Table 108 Summary of ANOVAs Run on Removed Competency Items by Possession of Student Affairs or Related Degree

Abridged competency item	SCPC competency cluster	*F* statistic significant	Group difference
Establish rapport[3]	Advising and helping	No	
Student multiple issues[4]	Advising and helping	No	
Challenge colleagues[9]	Advising and helping	No	
Encourage others[10]	Advising and helping	No	
Refer to resources[11]	Advising and helping	No	
Facilitate dialogue[21]	Pluralism and inclusion	No	
Act in accordance[25]	Ethics	No	
Supervision techniques[37]	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Organizational improvement[48]	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Leadership styles[49]	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Policy issues on campus[52]	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Differences public/private[55]	Legal foundations	No	
Institutional policy[66]	Assessment, evaluation, and research	No	
Interpret data[69]	Assessment, evaluation, and research	No	
Use results[70]	Assessment, evaluation, and research	No	

Note. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.

Table 109 Summary of ANOVAs Run on Factor Variables by Institutional Full-Time Student Enrollment

Factor variable	Derived from SCPC competency cluster	*F* statistic significant*	Group difference
Advising and developing students	Advising and helping	No	
Communication skills	Advising and helping	No	
Knowledge of student development theory	Student learning and development	No	
Multicultural competence	Pluralism and inclusion	No	
Knowledge of ethics	Ethics	No	
Ethical practice	Ethics	No	
Operational management	Leadership and management/administration	Yes	5,000-9,999[a] vs. 40,000 and above
Efficient and sustainable use of resources	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Managing interpersonal relations	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Hiring practices	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Understanding of organizational environment	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Creating and meeting work objectives	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Community awareness and engagement	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Knowledge of legal concepts and their application	Legal foundations	No	
Research, assessment, and evaluation	Assessment, evaluation, and research	No	
Teaching/training and enabling learning	Teaching	No	

Note. Bonferroni post hoc test was utilized to indicate group differences when omnibus *F* statistic was significant.
[a]Group had higher mean of compared groups.
*$p < .05$.

Table 110 Summary of ANOVAs Run on Removed Competency Items by Institutional Full-Time Student Enrollment

Abridged competency item	SCPC competency cluster	*F* statistic significant*	Group difference
Establish rapport[3]	Advising and helping	No	
Student multiple issues[4]	Advising and helping	No	
Challenge colleagues[9]	Advising and helping	No	
Encourage others[10]	Advising and helping	No	
Refer to resources[11]	Advising and helping	No	
Facilitate dialogue[21]	Pluralism and inclusion	No	
Act in accordance[25]	Ethics	No	
Supervision techniques[37]	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Organizational improvement[48]	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Leadership styles[49]	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Policy issues on campus[52]	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Differences public/private[55]	Legal foundations	Yes	Post hoc did not indicate
Institutional policy[66]	Assessment, evaluation, and research	No	
Interpret data[69]	Assessment, evaluation, and research	No	
Use results[70]	Assessment, evaluation, and research	No	

Note. Bonferroni post hoc test was utilized to indicate group differences when omnibus *F* statistic was significant. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.
*$p < .05$.

Table 111 Summary of ANOVAs Run on Factor Variables by Recoded Functional Area

Factor variable	Derived from SCPC competency cluster	*F* statistic significant*	Group difference
Advising and developing students	Advising and helping	No	
Communication skills	Advising and helping	No	
Knowledge of student development theory	Student learning and development	No	
Multicultural competence	Pluralism and inclusion	No	
Knowledge of ethics	Ethics	No	
Ethical practice	Ethics	Yes	Post hoc did not indicate
Operational management	Leadership and management/administration	Yes	Academic Assistance vs. Residence Life/Housing[a] Academic Assistance vs. Student Involvement[a] Academic Assistance vs. Other Student Affairs[a] Residence Life/Housing[a] vs. Other Student Affairs Student Involvement[a] vs. Other Student Affairs
Efficient and sustainable use of resources	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Managing interpersonal relations	Leadership and management/administration	Yes	Academic Assistance vs. Residence Life/Housing[a] Academic Assistance vs. Student Involvement[a] Academic Assistance vs. Other Student Affairs[a]
Hiring practices	Leadership and management/administration	Yes	Academic Assistance vs. Residence Life/Housing[a] Academic Assistance vs. Student Involvement[a] Residence Life/Housing[a] vs. Other Student Affairs Residence Life/Housing[a] vs. Student Involvement
Understanding of organizational environment	Leadership and management/administration	Yes	Academic Assistance vs. Student Involvement[a]
Creating and meeting work objectives	Leadership and management/administration	Yes	Residence Life/Housing vs. Student Involvement[a]
Community awareness and engagement	Leadership and management/administration	Yes	Residence Life/Housing vs. Student Involvement[a]

Factor variable	Derived from SCPC competency cluster	*F* statistic significant*	Group difference
Knowledge of legal concepts and their application	Legal foundations	Yes	Academic Assistance vs. Residence Life/Housing[a] Academic Assistance vs. Student Involvement[a] Academic Assistance vs. Other Student Affairs[a] Residence Life/Housing vs. Student Involvement[a]
Research, assessment, and evaluation	Assessment, evaluation, and research	Yes	Residence Life/Housing vs. Student Involvement[a]
Teaching/training and enabling learning	Teaching	Yes	Academic Assistance vs. Residence Life/Housing[a] Academic Assistance vs. Student Involvement[a] Academic Assistance vs. Other Student Affairs[a]

Note. Bonferroni post hoc test was utilized to indicate group differences when omnibus *F* statistic was significant.
[a]Group had higher mean of compared groups.
*$p < .05$.

Table 112 Summary of ANOVAs Run on Removed Competency Items by Recoded Functional Area

Abridged competency item	SCPC competency cluster	*F* statistic significant*	Group difference
Establish rapport[3]	Advising and helping	Yes	Post hoc did not indicate
Student multiple issues[4]	Advising and helping	No	
Challenge colleagues[9]	Advising and helping	No	
Encourage others[10]	Advising and helping	No	
Refer to resources[11]	Advising and helping	Yes	Academic Assistance[a] vs. Student Involvement
Facilitate dialogue[21]	Pluralism and inclusion	Yes	Academic Assistance vs. Residence Life/Housing[a] Academic Assistance vs. Student Involvement[a]
Act in accordance[25]	Ethics	No	
Supervision techniques[37]	Leadership and management/administration	Yes	Academic Assistance vs. Residence Life/Housing[a] Academic Assistance vs. Student Involvement[a] Academic Assistance vs. Other Student Affairs[a] Residence Life/Housing[a] vs. Other Student Affairs
Organizational improvement[48]	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Leadership styles[49]	Leadership and management/administration	Yes	Academic Assistance vs. Student Involvement[a]
Policy issues on campus[52]	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Differences public/private[55]	Legal foundations	No	
Institutional policy[66]	Assessment, evaluation, and research	No	
Interpret data[69]	Assessment, evaluation, and research	Yes	Residence Life/Housing vs. Other Student Affairs[a]

Abridged competency item	SCPC competency cluster	*F* statistic significant*	Group difference
Use results[70]	Assessment, evaluation, and research	Yes	Academic Assistance vs. Other Student Affairs[a] Residence Life/Housing vs. Other Student Affairs[a]

Note. Bonferroni post hoc test was utilized to indicate group differences when omnibus *F* statistic was significant. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.

[a]Group had higher mean of compared groups.

*$p < .05$.

Table 113 Summary of ANOVAs Run on Factor Variables by Institutional Type

Factor variable	Derived from SCPC competency cluster	*F* statistic significant*	Group difference
Advising and developing students	Advising and helping	No	
Communication skills	Advising and helping	No	
Knowledge of student development theory	Student learning and development	No	
Multicultural competence	Pluralism and inclusion	No	
Knowledge of ethics	Ethics	No	
Ethical practice	Ethics	No	
Operational management	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Efficient and sustainable use of resources	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Managing interpersonal relations	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Hiring practices	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Understanding of organizational environment	Leadership and management/administration	Yes	Four-year public vs. four-year private[a]
Creating and meeting work objectives	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Community awareness and engagement	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Knowledge of legal concepts and their application	Legal foundations	No	
Research, assessment, and evaluation	Assessment, evaluation, and research	No	
Teaching/training and enabling learning	Teaching	No	

[a]Group had higher mean of compared groups.
*$p < .05$.

Table 114 Summary of ANOVAs Run on Removed Competency Items by Institutional Type

Abridged competency item	SCPC competency cluster	*F* statistic significant*	Group difference
Establish rapport[3]	Advising and helping	No	
Student multiple issues[4]	Advising and helping	No	
Challenge colleagues[9]	Advising and helping	No	
Encourage others[10]	Advising and helping	No	
Refer to resources[11]	Advising and helping	No	
Facilitate dialogue[21]	Pluralism and inclusion	No	
Act in accordance[25]	Ethics	No	
Supervision techniques[37]	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Organizational improvement[48]	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Leadership styles[49]	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Policy issues on campus[52]	Leadership and management/administration	No	
Differences public/private[55]	Legal foundations	Yes	Four-year public vs. four-year private[a]
Institutional policy[66]	Assessment, evaluation, and research	No	
Interpret data[69]	Assessment, evaluation, and research	No	
Use results[70]	Assessment, evaluation, and research	No	

Note. Number in superscript in Abridged Competency Item column indicates the questionnaire competency item (Appendix F) to which the abbreviated competency entry refers.
[a]Group had higher mean of compared groups.
*$p < .05$.

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